

A STUDY OF THIRD PLACE: BENEFITS OF
SHARED LEISURE PRACTICES IN
PUBLIC GATHERING PLACES

by

Bradley H. Camp

A Thesis Submitted in Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree Doctor of Philosophy
in Leisure and Sport Management

Murfreesboro, TN

August 2015

Dr. Rudy Dunlap, Chair

Dr. Gerard Kyle

Dr. Joey Gray

ABSTRACT

Oldenburg (1999) argued that third places, which he defined as public gathering places outside the home and work that offer chances for casual social interaction, were disappearing in American communities. This troubled Oldenburg who argued that informal public life was essential to the social structure of communities, and that third places were ideal environments for facilitating public life. Therefore, Oldenburg and many researchers since have argued for continued research and celebration of third places. Unfortunately, leisure scholars have not given much attention to third place research (see Glover & Parry 2008; Mair, 2009 for exceptions).

However, leisure scholars have depicted the benefits of informal public life, democratic participation, and other shared leisure practices (Arai & Pedlar, 2003). This line of work showcases the potential of leisure to be more than just something that serves the individual, but also benefit the common good of our communities. Highlighting the difference between consumptive, individualistic view of leisure and the communitarian ideal allows scholars to articulate how meaningful leisure is to our communities.

This study continued the communitarian focused leisure research, and also pulled upon Oldenburg's (1999) third place concept. This allowed the researcher to examine the relevance of the third place concept in providing an important function within our communities. Also, the study was able to confirm that participation in public places facilitates social benefits (i.e. sense of place). The findings of the study supported work that highlights benefits of shared leisure practice (Arai & Pedlar, 2003), and also supported the relevance of the third place concept (Oldenburg, 1999).

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

I have always enjoyed visiting a town square in a small city, or vibrant area in a large municipality. I revel in experiencing these unknown places that serve as central hub for local social interaction (Oldenburg, 1999). This fascination, I eventually realized, is fueled by the desire for my own local hangout. I have been hoping that one day I might walk into a local establishment and hear the bartender ask, “the usual?” while an old acquaintance playfully shouts from the back, “you better get your money up front from that scoundrel!”

I did not have a town square, a local soda fountain, or a Main Street to frequent as an adolescent because there is a problem of place in America (Oldenburg, 1999). Urban planning policies that favor suburban development have contributed to the problem of place (Duany, Plater-Zyberk & Speck, 2000; Jacobs, 1961). These trends in urban planning have directly led to the rise of sprawl, thus communities are not only changing physically but socially as well. For example, Americans are not getting out into their local neighborhoods and communities as much, but are instead becoming more isolated in their leisure activities (Bellah, Madsen, Sullivan, Swidler & Tipton, 1985; Putnam, 2000). The problem of place, specifically the lack of informal public gathering spaces, in America quickly became my area of interest as graduate student for these reasons, and Ray Oldenburg’s work (1982, 1999) on the third place became a main focus.

The Third Place

Oldenburg is now a retired professor who, like me, delights in local establishments. He coined the term third place to represent public places that host regular, voluntary

gatherings of individuals outside the realm of home and work (1999). Oldenburg stated that these spots play host to informal, casual social interaction and leisure outside of the home and workplace (the first and second place respectively). The idea of a third place is that it offers individuals things (i.e. perspective, novelty) that home and work life simply cannot. Leisure researchers have recently taken interest in examining these claims and found that third places foster social connections and novel entertainment (Glover & Parry, 2009; Mair, 2009).

Third place participation is directly tied to leisure because people often engage community places during free time (Smale, 2006). As a leisure student, I was at first curious as to why individuals spend their free time in a pub, coffee shop, or local diner instead of pursuing other activities. I had my own reasons (i.e. belonging), but wondered if others felt the same. Oldenburg stated that people do, but also that people participate for other reasons such as keeping a healthy perspective on life or fulfilling social needs. These benefits resonated with me on an individual level, and I also became interested in understanding the communal benefits of third places.

Oldenburg (1999) stated that communities often are better served when socializing in third places helps establish trust and familiarity amongst citizens. These claims were of particular interest to me as an advocate of the potential of communal leisure activities. For example, leisure scholars have argued that people's free time provides an opportunity to engage in civic activities, community events, and even local democracy. Further, scholars have reflected upon how leisure activities can promote social capital (Glover, 2004; Hemingway, 1999; Hemingway & Glover, 2005), which make our communities better places to live (Putnam, 2000). Oldenburg's claims about

third places addressed these issues align with the aforementioned arguments. Oldenburg argued that third places often provide the space for such healthy, positive activity. Also, Oldenburg arguably addressed social capital when he cited friends by the set and social norms to be outcomes of participation. The personal and community benefits provided by third place participation are vast as displayed here, thus I am left wondering why more leisure scholars have not examined third place explicitly (c.f. Glover, 2009; Mair, 2009).

Oldenburg's concept has received attention from scholars outside of leisure studies, however. New third places have been identified (Cheng, 2002; Teiman, 2008; Hawkings & Ryan, 2013; Slater & Koo, 2010), health benefits have been depicted (Rosenbaum, 2009), models for support and attachment have been put forth (Waxman, 2006; Rosenbaum, Ward, Walker & Ostrom, 2007; Tumanan & Lansangan, 2012), physical structures have been analyzed (Mehta & Bosson, 2009), and many have reflected upon how technology and media have possibly expanded the third place concept (Ducheneaut, Moore & Nickell, 2007; Jacke, 2009). However, Oldenburg's large claims about individual and social benefits of third place participation have not been thoroughly examined. Therefore, I aimed to investigate individual meanings of third places to compare with Oldenburg's concept, and to also understand the social impact participation may have. The purpose of this project was twofold: 1) to provide a vivid description of a contemporary-prototypical third place, and 2) to examine Oldenburg's claim that third place participation fosters social benefits.

In the first article, I gathered a rich, deep understanding of a contemporary third place. My goal was to paint a vivid picture of Village Pub by focusing on thick description (Geertz, 1973). The description focused on the following: behavior of

participants and staff, social interaction, perceived individual benefits, and meaning making processes that contribute to the understanding of Village Pub. I then compared these findings with Oldenburg's original description.

The second article focused on community members' perceptions of and participation in third places. Furthermore, this article examined the relationship between third place usage and sense of place (SOP), and also the relationship between third place usage and sense of community (SOC). Sense of place is a construct that encapsulates human-place bonding (Farnum, Hall & Kruger, 2005), and SOC is a concept that measures social connections with a community (Trentelman, 2009). The analysis consisted of two separate models to analyze the two aforementioned constructs, and each model including confounding variables that previous research models identified.

Oldenburg (1999) stated that third place participation would result in people becoming more attached to their local community and the citizens within. Also, he stated third place patrons would gain friends by the set, help establish trust within the community, and facilitate social norms. The second article of this project will investigate Oldenburg's claims of attachment to communities and people within communities by measuring SOP and SOC.

Methodology

This entire research project is guided by an approach to research that seeks to challenge social 'givens', and seeks to bring about change (Crotty, 2010). The current study is informed by critical theory. Critical theory is an approach to research that seeks to unmask injustices, emancipate people from oppression, and call attention to ideologies that shape social life (Hemingway, 1999a). Specifically, this study critiques the ideology

of suburbanization and the individualistic, consumptive forms of leisure that it promotes. Historically, this ideology has led to the poor construction and use of space in cities that is unfair to citizens and has negative consequences for urban infrastructure (Harvey, 2008). Critical urban theory will be used throughout the entire study because it is critical of the historical knowledge surrounding urbanization, is concerned with alternative emancipatory forms of urbanism. Oldenburg (1999) was concerned that contemporary urban development would lead to the disappearance of third places within American communities, and I highlighted that assertion with critical urban theory. Thus, the following articles will challenge current urbanization ideals. More specifically, I believe that Americans should have a right to reshape our cities (Harvey, 2008). Thus, I want to create dialogue that might lead to reshaping of cities to include more third places.

Ethnographic techniques were utilized for the first article. I focused primarily on describing the Village Pub, and then provided some analysis and interpretation (Wolcott, 1999). Participant-observation conducted by the researcher, semi-structured interviews, and analysis of other artifacts related to the Village Pub was used as primary data for the first article. This article described in great detail what people in Village Pub do, the meanings they ascribe to what they do, and present that description in a way that calls attention to cultural processes of Village Pub (Wolcott, 1999).

The second article used a social survey to collect data. The survey featured four sections. First, participants were asked to identify third places within their community, rank these places in order of how often they use them, and then identify how often they frequent such places. These survey items have proven to be effective for identifying third place behaviors (Jefferes, Bracken, Jian & Casey, 2009), thus was used in this study.

Second, the study measured SOP using the four-dimensional model put forth by Kyle and colleagues (Kyle, Mowen & Tarrant, 2004). Third, the researchers used the brief SOC scale developed by Long & Perkins (2003) to avoid redundancy with place concepts used in the full SOC scale. Lastly, participants were asked to give information that is known to predict SOP and SOC, so that the researchers could control for these confounding variables.

The drop off, pick up method was used to collect data, and it was also administered to online communities to increase responses. The data was entered into SPSS statistical software for analysis, and two multiple regressions were developed. The first model featured SOP as the dependent variable, and the second model used SOC.

Setting

The data for both articles were collected in the same community, but at two different locations. The first article focuses on the Village Pub. The pub is located in East Nashville, TN. This specific environment displays several third place characteristics as described by Oldenburg, and was specifically chosen after ethnographic reconnaissance data (Wolcott, 1999) was obtained from multiple sites. Village Pub is located in an area that has four other dining establishments, making it a somewhat vibrant area. Further, Village Pub is located within a part of town that has seen much revitalization, and is thought to be “hip” and desirable. The interior features a classic “U” shaped bar, and the walls display local brewery and sport memorabilia. The lead researcher assumed the role of participant-observer while collecting data at this site, thus seeking to become a ‘regular’ while also collecting data.

For the second article, I administered the survey in East Nashville, TN. This section of the city, as stated, has undergone much revitalization in recent years. Thus many new restaurants, bars, coffee shops, and other businesses have located in this area. Llyod (2011) recently depicted the tensions that exist between new inhabitants (mostly white, middle class, well-educated) and old (largely African-American, Latino, and Middle Eastern, working class). Data that represents all of these demographics was important. Therefore, the study attempted to represent the demographics of the community by using the drop off-pick up method.

Purpose and Research Questions

The purpose of this project was to examine the relevance of third place as a concept in contemporary society. To achieve this purpose, I took two different approaches to examine third place. The ethnography of Village Pub provided detailed descriptions of behaviors, practices, and social meaning making processes of participants and staff of Village Pub. This study depicted a contemporary third place and compared it to Oldenburg's description. Second, the social survey examined the relationship between third place behaviors and social benefits. Specifically, the survey investigated whether third place use is correlated with higher levels of SOP and/or SOC.

Article 1:

1. What characteristics, behaviors, attached meanings, and associated benefits best characterize The Village Pub?
2. How do the findings compare to Oldenburg's conceptualization of third place?

Article 2:

- 1) Is there a significant relationship between the dependent variable (SOP in model 1, SOC in model 2) and the independent variables taken as a set?
- 2) How strong is the relationship between the dependent variable and the predictor variables?
- 3) What is the direction of the relationship between the variables?

Hypotheses for Article 2:

Model 1) Participants with higher levels of third place use will be more likely to have higher levels of SOP than those with lower levels of third place use.

Model 2) Participants with higher levels of third place use will be more likely to have higher levels of SOC than those with lower levels of third place use.

CHAPTER II

LITERATURE REVIEW

This study is concerned with people's perceptions of public environments within their community. As with all social science research, the study of people can be very untidy. Not only does a social scientist have to take into account that people are not easily abstracted or reduced into simple ideas, but one must also consider a wide array of variables and/or concepts that can influence the particular phenomenon under investigation. I do not claim the following work to be *the* truth regarding third place, but instead claim that my results will contribute to a body of knowledge regarding social urban life. Also, I believe to contribute to that body of knowledge the current study must pull on a wide array of topics and lines of research. Thus, this chapter will review related concepts that can further shed light on my findings, and contribute to them.

Critical Theory

Horkheimer (1937) stated in his landmark essay that traditional theory operated outside of social reality, was timeless, and objective, and that critical theory was conscious of human conditions and social structures. He emphasized the importance of grounding empirical work within the reality of the social world. Adorno (1957), Horkheimer's associate, stressed that theory that did not consider readily available and observable social information would be no more than a mere artifact of the method applied. Thus, critical theory focuses on how theory can be tied to practice (Hemingway, 1999a).

Reflexivity is a key aspect of critical theory (Brenner, 2009). Critical theorists are always drawing attention to the 'givens' in society. For example, Horkheimer (1937) argued traditional theorists, might take for granted the specific time and place of the

present situation. However, critical theorists assume that all knowledge is situated in a specific place and time, thus not drawing attention to, and reflecting upon that, would distance critical theory from social reality. Assuming that knowledge is historically situated, it is not a far leap to assume that knowledge is shaped by social structures, cultures, and more specifically, ideologies. For example, Karl Marx, whose work (1844, 1867) has largely contributed to the establishment of critical theory, consistently drew attention to the ideology of capitalism. Marx was adamant that capitalism was an ideology that controlled, oppressed, and shaped social life. The unmasking of ideologies is a consistent theme of critical theory. More importantly, Marx's work has shaped conceptual understanding of society and social science.

Critical theorists attempt to combat oppression and emancipate people from injustices (Hemingway, 1999a). Again, critical theory attempts to separate itself from other forms of research that do not have a practical impact, and which claim to be distanced from particularities of a given time and place. Critical theorists can create a dialogue, educate and be educated by oppressed, and begin the process of humanization by implementing critical theory in their work (e.g. Freire, 1972). I believe this line of work is not easy, and will disrupt social norms. However, production of research that is not informed by social realities will be far removed from the humanity of social life. Further, production of research that does not call attention to oppression or injustices will certainly not help in righting such wrongs, and may even reify them (Hemingway, 1999a).

Critical Urban Theory

The social nature of the urban environment is ripe for implementation of critical theory (Brenner, 2009). Critical urban theory is a specific implementation of critical theory that has been developing over the years. Brenner stated that critical urban theorists assume that current knowledge regarding urbanization is historical, that they are aware of and reject ideas that advance unjust power within cities, and that they are concerned to excavate possibilities for alternative emancipatory forms of urbanism. Critical urban theorists look to unmask the ideologies that seek to restructure political and economic power within urban environments. Often this restructuring is in the hands of few, and empowers only the fortunate. Some scholars argue that individuals and communities have a right to the city, thus having some control over the reshaping of our cities is paramount (Harvey, 2008). The ideals of critical urban theory were directly applied within the current study.

As stated, there is a problem of place in American communities (Oldenburg, 1999). This problem of place is a direct result of suburbanization ideology. Suburban planning emphasizes the separation of the essential components of communities (i.e. residential areas, businesses), and this ideology grew rapidly in America in recent years (Duany, Plater-Zyberk & Speck, 2000; Putnam, 2000). This wide scale reshaping of our communities is affecting our communities in negative ways (Harvey, 2008). Citizens face issues of gentrification (Llyod, 2012), disappearance of third places (Oldenburg, 1999, Duany, Plater-Zyberk & Speck, 2000), and lack of any local, democratic control (Harvey, 2008) over the rebuilding of our cities. I consider these things to be unjust. I agree with Harvey who stated that we should have the right to reshape our cities in the image of

ourselves. Currently, this is not the case. Thus, the current investigation highlighted that fact.

Critical theory guided the philosophical assumptions of this investigation. Specifically, the researchers aimed to call attention to the ideology of suburbanization, and instead highlight the benefits of spending time in public places, something that is not prioritized in suburban development. Oldenburg argued that third places could serve as great, good, public gathering spaces that bring the community together and provide individual benefits. However, as he and others (i.e. Harvey, 2008; Brenner, 2009) have argued, city dwellers often have no say in the demolition of our favorite places, or in the creation of new ones. This investigation unmasked idea that the “powers at be” have control over our cities, and that we as citizens must make the best of it. It is my hope to draw attention to the wide array of benefits that our communities can offer if we create great, good places.

Ray Oldenburg’s Third Place

Oldenburg argued that great civilizations share a common feature: distinctive informal public gathering places (Oldenburg, 1999). German beer gardens, English pubs, French cafés, and Viennese coffeehouses are the finest examples of public gathering places, termed third places. Unfortunately for those living within the United States, the American versions of third places have largely disappeared. According to Oldenburg, third places are desperately needed to help American communal and democratic life. To examine this claim, we must thoroughly understand the following: a) the characteristics of third places, b) the personal benefits third place participation offers, and c) the impact third places can

have on communities. First, it is important to elaborate on what Oldenburg described as the problem of place.

Problem of Place

Oldenburg was adamant that informal public life is essential to a well functioning society.

The problem is that, as previously stated, there are not many places for the public to gather informally in contemporary America. Americans, then, are often found gathering in places that are not meant for such activity. Adult men may buy a beer from a 7-11 and linger in the parking lot with their friends while enjoying their beverages. Adolescents often socialize in parking lots of grocery stores or other lots close to main roads.

Eventually, storeowners or police disband this inappropriate loitering. However, if in their shoes one might ask, “Well, where should we go?”

Contemporary urban planning is doing away with informal gathering places (Duany, Plater-Zyberk & Speck, 2000; Oldenburg, 1999;). The urban landscape is hostile to and devoid of informal gathering places. According to Oldenburg, prior generations were much more likely to enjoy informal gathering spaces than current generations because of the rise of suburban type development. Prior generations typically were able to hang out diners, soda fountains, drug stores, and even a town’s Main Street (Jacobs, 1961; Oldenburg, 1999), but these places no longer exist. Therefore, it is important to answer the, “where should we go?” question. If Oldenburg’s claim about urban planning is true, an issue that will be examined in this report, it is important to understand what makes a good informal gathering place. After all, those being kicked out of the parking lot need to know.

To start the review, I propose the readers consider a popular public establishment. Let us consider the Starbucks, then. Starbucks executives have continually asserted that their coffee shops are meant to serve as third places (Simon, 2009). Oldenburg and others have been skeptical of Starbucks potential to be a true third place citing the lack of casual social interaction and conversation (Simon, 2009), which Oldenburg, as I will depict, describes as the vital characteristics of third places. For example, “one learns they do not have to talk at Starbucks. Actually one learns not to talk. They learn to keep their head down” (Simon, 2009, p. 251).

Starbucks stores seem to foster people being in the company of one another, but do not foster interaction. Simon stated that after all his visits to Starbucks he has engaged in just a handful of conversations with people he did not know, and depicted himself and others as those who open their laptop, plug in their headphones, and thus make social interaction unlikely. This is only one viewpoint, and is no way meant to be a personal indictment of Starbucks (or even a judgment that Starbucks is not a third place). In fact, another study has shown that Starbucks can be used mainly for social interaction and not working on laptops or other isolated activities (Woldoff, 2013). I present the Starbucks example to allow readers to consider public spaces and contemplate how these environments may or may not resemble Oldenburg’s third place. Further, I want to call attention to the fact that I have no contemporary third place to present to readers. I could only think of examples that do not fit the third place concept, thus it may very well be true that third places are disappearing.

Character of Third Place

Often times, Oldenburg claimed, people think of a local bar or pub when thinking of the third place. However, most pubs or bars in America are not likely to be third places (Oldenburg, 1999). Many bars do not have regulars, do not facilitate informal social interaction, and are often not full of conversation. One may often spot individuals sitting quietly by themselves in a hotel bar, thus this bar becomes a lonely place not a third place. Further, a nightclub or bar frequented by rambunctious patrons (e.g. a college bar perhaps) may often play loud music that discourages casual conversation. Oldenburg was explicit in laying out the characteristics of a third place, which are vastly different than the bars described above.

Third places provide neutral ground (Oldenburg, 1999). For example, a dinner party at a private residence and dinner at a local restaurant provide two different settings and experiences. One is someone's home, and the other is no one's home. A visitor in someone's home may not feel entirely comfortable, while the host is figuratively and literally at home. A public gathering place would negate this dynamic. Public places provide protection for each other, and that it serves the purpose of providing a neutral location.

Third places provide a neutral ground, but they also serve as levelers (Oldenburg, 1999). In a work environment, often times there is a boss or manager. This person holds a status above those under his/her direction in the workplace. In a third place, however, any worldly or social status (e.g. department manager, employee) is checked at the door. The average worker is now on level terms with his/her boss. By their very nature, Oldenburg asserted, a leveler is inclusive in this way. All are accepted, and all are on level standing.

Oldenburg stated, this neutral ground characteristic provides the place, and the leveling aspect sets the stage for the activity in third place. That activity is conversation. People are able to converse, to interact, and to socialize. Because people are protected from one another and status does not play a part, people in third places engage in conversation with those around them. A place is not a third place if conversation is not a central activity (Oldenburg, 1999).

Accessibility and accommodation of third places are important components to Oldenburg's description of the third place. Informal gathering places far removed from one's residence will cause problems. First, it is inconvenient for prospective patrons to frequent, and second when patrons make it there it is less likely they will know other patrons (Oldenburg, 1999). After all, third places are places that have regulars.

Regulars are found in every good third place (Oldenburg, 1999). Oldenburg placed the regulars at the core of third places, "The third place is just so much space unless the right people are there to make it come alive. It is the regulars who give the place its character" (p. 33-34). Oldenburg further claimed that third places have regulars who set a hospitable tone to newcomers. Regulars are able to set the tone because of the nature of most third places.

Most third places often have a low profile. Third places are often plain. Much different than a place with a bright sign out front and very branded atmosphere, third places are unassuming (Oldenburg, 1999). This plain nature allows the regulars to set the tone for the place, instead of management doing it for them. The replicated and highly branded environment of Starbucks would present the opposite a low profile.

The tone the regulars set is one of playfulness (Oldenburg, 1999). Conversation is the main activity in the third place as previously acknowledged, but often times it is very playful conversation. Newcomers may sometimes be taken aback by the playful interaction of regulars in action. “I guess they let anybody in here” is a frequent line when one regular enters the place. The playful nature is so important to the third place that the unmistakable mark of true acceptance in a third place is not that of being taken seriously, but being included in play. Once accepted, patrons may feel more comfortable – perhaps even feel at home.

Third places are, at least in some ways, a home away from home (Oldenburg, 1999). Oldenburg reported five aspects when making this claim. One feels rooted to the third place because they see familiar faces and feel involved with those people. Second, one feels a sense of possession over the third place. Patrons may even start to talk of the third place in first person possessive. Third, unlike one’s home, you typically cannot sleep in a third place, but one’s third place does regenerate or restore individuals. Fourth, patrons feel the “freedom to be”. This freedom involves being at ease and expressing one’s self. Finally, the feeling of warmth is essential to feeling at home. Oldenburg described this as the least tangible, but it states the third place would quickly dissolve without it.

The characteristics of the third place, as reviewed above, are what make for good informal public gathering places (Oldenburg, 1999). In his work, Oldenburg then turned his attention to detailing the benefits of such places. These benefits are described on the personal and communal level the latter which Oldenburg called the greater good.

Personal Benefits of Third Places

The personal benefits of third places are novelty, perspective, spiritual tonic, and friends by the set (Oldenburg, 1999). For the patron who has a third place, these are the benefits that he or she may enjoy. I examined these benefits in order, starting with novelty.

Oldenburg (1999), not shy of his adoration for places, argued that American's leisure time activities do not offer novelty, but third places do. Leisure activities such as monotonous television viewing are those that fail to provide the novelty that Americans need. Third places, however, provide a diverse population to interact with, thus often providing patrons with a different experience or point of view. Further, third places provide novelty because of the looseness of their structure. One can just pop into a third place, or go there completely on a whim. Finally, in a third place, patrons have a collective ability to create the environment, which is hard to find in other leisure activities. The environment patrons create often leads to other benefits, such as perspective.

Third places offer perspective to their patrons (Oldenburg, 1999). As discussed, the mark of acceptance to a third place is not to be taken seriously, but to be involved in play. Participants of the third place know how to make use of humor and laughter, and this helps keep things in perspective. Furthermore, that positive outlook on life demands contact and communication with others. "The third place contributes to a healthy perspective by combining pleasure with association in a wide group and affording the collective wisdom of its members" (p. 50). Perspective was just one emotional/cognitive benefits according to Oldenburg.

Oldenburg also argued that patrons of third place receive a type of spiritual tonic. Throughout his work, Oldenburg described humans as social creatures, thus he claimed that we have social needs. The third place can serve those needs “Many a third place regular represents conversationally and sociably what the mistress represents sexually” (p. 57). Essentially, Oldenburg argued that people have a desire to socially interact with others, and by participating in third places people could fulfill this desire. Through these interactions, patrons also gain something else.

Third place participation earns the patron friends by the set (Oldenburg, 1999). These types of friends offer something different than intimate relationships we may have with family or loved ones. Patrons gather friends through affiliation with the third place. The friends one makes in this way offer greater depth and variety because the patron would have never chosen these friendships, but they are formed because of affiliation. Oldenburg’s argument was that people need friendships that are immune from the messiness of other close-knit relationships.

The personal benefits detailed by Oldenburg are vast. Novelty provides something new or interesting, while perspective can provide people with a healthy mindset. Further, the term spiritual tonic seems to infer that we have souls that need to be filled with substance offered in these third places. Finally, friends by the set offer patrons the friendships they may not have outside of immediate family or friends, and the argument is that we all need these types of loose relationships.

The Greater Good

Oldenburg (1999) suggested personal benefits extend beyond the individual, “Yet even those profits of participation that seem most personal are never wholly so, for whatever

improves social creatures improves their relations with others” (p. 43). However, third places offer more communal benefits than just improving the community’s inhabitants. These great good places also play a central role in democracy, encourage a more socialized society, act as a force of good, allow for a safe place for fun, and encourage citizens to care more about public space (Oldenburg, 1999).

Oldenburg detailed how informal gathering places offered a way for citizens to be active in democracy. In America our pubs used to serve as places where citizens meet with policy makers and voiced their opinions about issues. These informal gathering places offered a venue for citizens to be involved in their government. With the disappearance of third places, leaders are not identified or held accountable in these places, but citizens only know of their leaders through the media or technology (Oldenburg, 1999). Third places could serve as an avenue for grass-roots participation in politics, thus serving an essential function for a healthy democracy.

Group interaction does more than promote democracy; it also promotes a mutual understanding of society (Oldenburg, 1999). Third places serve as a place for people to come together and converse about a wide array of topics, and it could be through these interactions that people develop a sense understanding about their community. The habit of association that can occur within third places can further socialize people. This socialization process is why Oldenburg argued that it is in the local dinner, pub, or coffee shop that people give substance and articulation to group sentiment (1999).

Media and technological influence is again mentioned when Oldenburg wrote of third places as forces for good. He asserted that the media outlets such as radio, television news, etc. have a large influence over what Americans think is right and wrong

(Oldenburg, 1999). It is far better to have face-to-face interaction with those within our communities and develop communal understanding of such matters. Third places can offer patrons a place to converse about such issues, serve as places where citizens can correct inappropriate behavior, and can be places that define appropriateness (i.e. how many drinks should be served to one individual). In light of these arguments, Oldenburg argued that third places could be a force for good within the community.

Third places offer fun with a lid (Oldenburg, 1999). As stated earlier, third places serve as a place where appropriateness is defined, so fun does not go too far. Third places offer patrons an outlet for fun within reason, but also serve as a place where patrons can relieve stress through these means. Oldenburg argued that people need a place to blow off steam, and often times they cannot do these within their homes. Third places offer a place for fun and relief, and keeps both within reason.

Oldenburg stated that often time people are indifferent about public space. If people are not attached to an area, they may be less inclined to pick up a piece of trash or care if the place has been vandalized (Oldenburg, 1999). However, if people are attached to a third place in some way they may be more likely to care about public space. A patron of a third place might take it upon himself or herself to sort out a problem instead of saying, “the city pays people to take care of this” (p. 83). This type of attachment and ensuing care for public space serves the greater good.

There are many personal and communal benefits to third places. The current review of the topic has attempted to detail these benefits as Oldenburg described. Also, by reviewing the characteristics of third places this review hopefully has provided insight into why Oldenburg made such claims. Oldenburg did not have the final say on third

place, however. Many researchers spanning different disciplines have taken interest in the concept.

Continued Third Place Research

Oldenburg (1999) warned readers that third places were disappearing across America, and would continue to do so. He cited the rise of sprawl, urban planning and zoning, and the rise of national-chain establishments for the decline of third places. Recently, researchers from different backgrounds have examined the concept in attempts to understand if Oldenburg's predictions are true for prototypical third places (e.g. bookstores, coffee shops), if new third places exist, and to examine the benefits of contemporary third places. Thus, the literature on third place spans a few different disciplines. Authors from marketing, hospitality, health, leisure studies, and more have continued the examination of third place. The following review will depict the recent literature regarding third place.

I begin the review by examining research into Oldenburg's prototypical third places. Libraries and bookstores have been continuously examined within the literature. Laing and Royle (2013) stated that contemporary bookstores in the United Kingdom could not profess to be third places because conversation is not the main activity. However, he does point out all the benefits of browsing, lingering, experiencing flow, and enjoying the cafés so often provided. Lawson (2004) claimed that libraries are the true third places in America due to the fact that libraries accept all people and display many physical and social characterizations of third places. For libraries to continue to remain relevant, managers must pay attention to the upkeep of not only the physical structure, but the virtual amenities offered as well (Lawson, 2004).

Coffee shops are another traditional third place that have received widespread attention from third place scholars (Tumanan & Lansangan, 2013; Milligan, 1998; Waxman, 2006; Woldoff, 2013). Researchers from marketing and hospitality have focused on patrons' perceptions and opinions regarding coffee shops. For example, Waxman (2006) found that patrons appreciated pleasant aromas and comfortable seating, and that these things led to continued use of the shop. Further, Woldoff's (2013) observations of different coffee shops depicted how space, available amenities (e.g. wifi), and friendly staff affected participation. Milligan (1998) went in to great depth to explain how staff and customers became attached to a coffee shop, and then detailed how participants viewed the coffee shop once it was reopened in a new location. The 1998 study was valuable to third place research, but also to another body of work (i.e. place theory). Milligan's study, and the relevance of place, will be discussed at the end of this section. The review will now turn to another line of third place research.

Crick (2011) argued there are different types of third places that we must now consider (e.g. the virtual, the spectacular, the commercial). Crick's conceptualizations do not fit well with Oldenburg's (1999) third place. For example, the characteristics of third places (i.e. low profile) are in contrast to commercial or spectacular third places. However, the third place literature has been enriched by research that has examined new environments.

New physical environments have been proposed as potential third places (e.g. Cheng, 2002; Slater & Koo, 2010; Tieman, 2008; Glover & Parry, 2009; Mair, 2009). Art museums in London have been depicted as places where individuals like to drop by, hang out, or meet up with friends (Slater & Koo, 2010). Tieman (2008) examined farmers

markets as third places and showed how merchants and customers engaged in casual social interaction, met new people, were engaged for local political reasons, and often lingered in these environments. Also, Hawkins and Ryan (2013) conducted a study of a music festival. They showed that participants often made friends at this show, displayed social niceties, and participated for interaction with others. Mair (2009) studied a curling (type of sport similar to shuffleboard) club in Canada. Her study depicted how these clubs catered to their community by functioning as a sport club, a recreational center, a pub, and diner all at once. The diverse nature of the particular club Mair studied not only displayed a new type of third place, but also showed how third places can adapt to continue serving their community well. There are other studies that have examined new environments, and these investigations will be reviewed under other themes (e.g. new health benefits of third places) as appropriate for their contribution. Virtual places will be reviewed first.

As Oldenburg (1999) predicted, technology has affected third place participation. For example, multiplayer video games offer an avenue for participants to engage and socialize with people from around the world while participating in the game. Ducheneaut, Moore & Nickell (2007) analyzed the interactions between participants. Written text is often shared between players in these games, especially those in the ‘area of each other’ (referring to space inside the virtual game). Further, in one game the researcher was able to analyze a cantina where players were required to go to often per the rules of the game (the virtual avatar would be replenished by frequenting the bar). By examining the social interaction that transpired in these settings, researchers depicted how communication often transcended the game, thus opening the possibility for casual social interaction or

making new friends. Also, investigations into the virtual world have been focused on computer-mediated communication (e.g. chat groups, etc.). Soukup (2006) described the Internet communication as a potential avenue for social interaction for those around the world. While virtual third places may or may not exist, all these researchers admitted the limitations involved with virtual interaction. However, virtual spaces undoubtedly offer potential for social interaction and different benefits, and new benefits of third place participation have also been an area of third place research.

Recent research has depicted how third place participation results in social and personal benefits (Rosenbaum, 2006). Rosenbaum has influenced third place literature in many ways. First, Rosenbaum (2006) introduced a model for how social support occurs in third place. Not all participants in third place are full-fledged regulars. Thus, benefits occur at different levels. Rosenbaum depicted the stages of place-as-practical, place-as-gathering, and place-as-home. These are the different categories by which one receives benefits of third place participation. At the first level, participants view the place practically and frequent for such reasons (e.g. place meets the needs of hunger). Second, participants start to see the place as more than practical and thus use it to meet with friends, or possibly socialize in other ways. Lastly, participants become regulars of the establishment. These stages provide insight into the manner in which social support may be obtained in third places, especially for older people. However, this is not Rosenbaum's only contribution.

Rosenbaum (2009) also examined the restorative benefits of third places. He was able to depict how adolescents were able to use arcades to restore directed attention. Oldenburg had hinted at the mental health benefits of third place, but Rosenbaum was the

first to depict how exactly this might occur. Research into health benefits of third place participation is not limited to Rosenbaum's work, however.

Glover and Parry (2009) studied Gilda's Club in Canada as a third place. Gilda's is a club for people who currently or recently had cancer. The venue offered recreational space for various activities, promoted drop-ins, offered an aesthetically appealing physical structure, and most importantly fostered a healing process through social support. Participants used Gilda's as a place away from home and the hospital. Members were able to support one another in ways that family and friends often could not due to the fact that they understood what each other were experiencing. This venue is a new type of third place, and it articulates the immense value that third places can have in lives of community members.

Jeffers, Bracken, Jian & Casey (2009) also revealed important information regarding the benefits of third place participation. Their survey depicted a correlation between available third places within a community and perceived quality of life. Much like Rosenbaum and Glover, Jeffers, Bracken, Jian & Casey provided substance to the claims made long ago by Oldenburg. These studies have achieved something that has been lacking in third place literature. The results of these examinations articulate the correlations between third place participation and an improved society.

The review of recent literature depicts research that asked difficult questions of prototypical third places, investigations proposing new third place environments, and work that has furthered understandings of potential benefits of third place participation. Third place literature has taken the Oldenburg's concept to new heights. Oldenburg was very concerned with the changing landscape in America for fear of losing "great good

places”. The authors represented in this review embody the essence of Oldenburg’s argument. Oldenburg argued that we as a nation should reflect upon the benefits of public spaces that foster personal and community benefits (the reflection upon Starbucks may serve as good practice). The literature review provided helps the researcher of the current study, and the readers, to reflect upon the state of our communal public gathering spaces. Further, I feel there are important assertions that need to be made about the state of third place research upon this reflection of the literature.

The purpose of this study was to examine Oldenburg’s claims about personal and social benefits of third place participation. Many studies cited in this review did that, but I argue there are bodies of work outside of third place that could help illuminate the ways that individuals and communities feel, interact, and perceive third places. Specifically, the sense of place (SOP) is a body of literature that examines the person-place relationship from many different angles. Milligan’s (1998) study displayed participants’ connections with an old campus coffee shop, and was able to illuminate the processes of how these individuals socially constructed the meaning of this building by using place theory.

Sense of community (SOC) is another body of work that could help explain the community feelings about third place. Perkins and Long (2002) stated that SOC is a measurement that gauges belonging and bonding to community. Oldenburg explicitly stated that third place participation had this effect, thus it seems logical to incorporate SOC into a study of third place. The theories of SOP and SOC have potential to conceptualize the personal and social benefits of third place participation in ways yet to be explored. Therefore, these concepts will be defined and reviewed below.

Place Theory

The concept of place is easy to understand in some ways, but hugely complicated in others. For example, it is relatively easy to explain that space and place have different definitions. Place refers to an area that has been infused with some sort of social meaning, while space is a geographic location that has no such meanings attached to it (Tuan, 1979). The study of place becomes difficult to understand when considering all the different concepts and terminologies that have been introduced. This confusion comes from attempts to understand place, but also because person-place bonds are messy and multi-dimensional. The following review will attempt to articulate the differences and similarities between terminology used in the study of place.

Sense of place and place attachment are the two most common terms used to encapsulate human-place bonding (Farnum, Hall & Kruger, 2005). Sense of place has been proposed to be an all-encompassing term that reflects a wide variety of human-place bonding (Jorgensen & Stedman, 2001). For example, Hay (1998) depicted the very dynamic nature of place in the lives of natives and nonnatives in his longitudinal study, and showed personal relationships, insider status, and significant others played a role in developing a sense of place. Sense of place is the general sense of an individual's emotion, bond, or recognition of a specific place (Altman & Low, 1992). This terminology, by its general and broad nature, leaves open the door to different and more specific dimensions to the human-place bond (i.e. place identity, place dependence, to be reviewed later). The broad nature of SOP is why many have opted to utilize it to encapsulate person-place phenomena (Hay, 1998; Joregensen & Stedman, 2001;

Stedman, 2003). Place attachment, however, is another all-encompassing term (Farnum, Hall & Kruger, 2005).

Place attachment is generally defined as an emotional connection (usually positive) to a place (Low & Altman, 1992). Thus, one can see how place attachment could be viewed as a bit more specific than SOP. Williams & Vaske (2003) noted that when used broadly, environmental psychologists have viewed place attachment as an all-encompassing term. The concept of place attachment has been viewed as having two dimensions, place identity and place dependence (Williams & Roggenbuck, 1989), but recently others have added new dimensions to the construct (Hammit, Kyle & Oh, 2009). The importance of place identity and place dependence is worth devoting a paragraph to.

Place identity describes a dimension that measures one's self-concept, self-identity in relation to place (Proshansky, Fabian & Kaminoff, 1983). This concept depicts how place is more than merely a context for developing attachment, but rather place identity is a form of self-identity. Place dependence is the construct that measures ones' preference for a specific place (Williams & Roggenbuck, 1989). Thus, place dependence can depict the degree to which a person prefers a specific place (usually to carry out an activity of some sort) compared to another possible location. This two-dimensional idea of place attachment has received vast attention in leisure, recreation, and outdoor studies (e.g. Kyle, 2004; Williams, Patterson & Roggenbuck, 1992; Williams & Vaske, 2003;).

Leisure and recreation scholars have mostly been concerned with understanding recreationists' emotions and behaviors in regards to place (Stokowski, 2002). Scholars studying place attachment in recreation settings have sought to improve the understanding of land managers and other practitioners. Researchers have been trying to

bridge the gap between recreationist' perceptions about the land, and management decisions regarding said land. Thus, researchers have focused on depicting the levels of attachment that individuals may or may not have regarding specific places. Generally, the two-dimensional model proposed by Williams and Vaske (1989) has been modified and reused for many of these studies (as cited above). These studies have led to new understandings of place attachment, place identity, and place dependence, and the extent to which attachment is related to activity involvement (Kyle, Graefe, Manning & Bacon, 2003).

Place identity and place dependence remain similar concepts, but measure different things (Williams & Vaske, 2003). For example, Kyle, Graefe, Manning & Bacon (2004) have shown how place identity is negatively related to participants' feelings toward certain social factors, while dependence worked in opposite fashion. Also, place dependence was correlated to positive feelings toward development of recreation areas, but place identity was not. These two constructs have been shown to work in different fashions at times, but still the two dimensions work well in generalizing the larger concept of place attachment (Williams & Vaske, 2003). Williams and Vaske recently confirmed the validity and reliability of these dimensions, but also suggested that new dimensions could be added.

Social bonding, familiarity, belongingness, rootedness, satisfaction, and other concepts have been proposed to measure place attachment recently (Hammit, Kyle & Oh, 2009). Hammit, Kyle and Oh found that the five-dimensional model (familiarity, belongingness, identity, dependence, rootedness) worked very well, and also tested a full, parsimonious, and partial model, which yielded favorable results for the models that

added more dimensions. Thus, it seems that the place attachment literature in leisure and recreation studies is heeding Williams and Vaske's (2003) call for adding more dimensions. Futher, Kyle and his colleagues' work on place attachment's relationship with activity involvement answered the call for leisure and recreation research to investigate predicted behavior and economic benefits (see Stokowski, 2002). Place attachment literature in leisure and recreation studies has developed, and looks to have a bright future. However, others have been critical of what can be perceived as neglect of separate place meanings and place attachment (Stedman, 2003).

Stedman (2003) has argued for the separation place meanings from place attachment. The argument that Stedman made is that place meanings reflect a cognitive dimension, and place attachment refers to an affective/emotional dimension. The type of meanings that are ascribed to a place can have an affect on the degree of attachment. For example, participants in Stedman's (2008) study who described their places as an escape were more attached than those who described their places in more social terms. Thus, it seems that the manner in which one views a place has important implications. Stedman argued in 2003 that place attachment literature would be better served if researchers could depict things outside of the usual two-dimensional models. For example, Stedman argued that understanding the meaning people ascribe to a place, their level of attachment to that place, and also their general satisfaction with the place would enhance our understandings. Place meanings have received much attention after Stedman's and others arguments for the concept.

Stokowski (2002) has argued for a more social understanding of place. She argued that by understanding the processes that give and construct place meanings is

important. Social, political, and historical factors shape the way in which individuals come to view place, and research highlighting these elements have added valuable understandings. Kyle and Chick (2007) provided a description of the way social worlds contribute to the meaning of place. The 2007 study examined people who annually attended a fair, and showed how, in this specific context, social aspects contributed more to the meaning of place than physical aspects. The call for a more social constructionist view of place phenomena represents one side (i.e. qualitative approaches) of the dichotomy of place research (see Garst, Williams, Roggenbuck, 2009; Wynveen, Kyle, Stephen & Sutton, 2010 for similar studies).

The study of place has been represented by two different approaches, quantitative and qualitative (Patterson & Williams, 2005). Place research has its roots in phenomenological work (e.g. Tuan, 1979; Relph, 1976), while many authors have attempted to set out a quantitative agenda for place (Stedman, 2003). Recently, it has been noted that both qualitative and quantitative work are relevant in place research (Patterson & Williams, 2005). The continued refinement of measurement scales and concepts will produce more exact conceptualizations regarding what it is that place researchers are studying (Stedman, 2003). Qualitative research can be explorative and provide rich data that would otherwise go unnoticed (e.g. Kyle & Chick, 2007). Patterson and Williams argued that although terminology in place theory can be confusing and researchers often have different approaches, it is important to understand that the literature offers a very wide understanding of person-place phenomenon. Therefore, different approaches, disciplines, and terminologies have contributed well to our understandings.

Like Patterson and Williams, Manzo and Perkins (2006) have argued for a more holistic view of person-place phenomena. Specifically, Manzo and Perkins argued for an ecological understanding of place, and claimed that pulling on other social theory would help in understanding person-place bond. There is a trail of research that has incorporated such thought. Perkins (2002) depicted how place attachment, sense of community, social capital, length of residence, neighboring behavior, civic engagement, and demographics, among other things, all affected each other and needed to be considered together. Further, Mihaylov and Perkins (2014) constructed a model for community place attachment that showed how it contributed to social capital. Manzo and Perkins (2006), Mihaylov and Perkins (2014), and Perkins and Long (2002) have all argued for understanding the dynamic nature of place attachment.

The study of place has led to diverse understandings of how people view, interact with, and socially construct environments. The current study is focused on how establishments within a specific community provide individual and communal benefits. Therefore, the understandings place theory provides will be pulled upon to guide the study in its methodology and analysis. However, as noted above, I believe that other concepts must be contemplated as well. Specifically, SOC is another body of work that studies the people-place phenomenon. However, this is a separate body of work that deserves a review outside of place theory.

Sense of Community

Much like the place literature, the scholarship of community attachment can be confusing. Trentelman (2009) argued that this confusion comes from place and community scholars using community attachment terminology interchangeably with

place attachment. In his review, Trentelman set out to clear up the murkiness surrounding the two literatures, and he conceptualized them as different bodies of work that often overlap.

A difference between the two perspectives is that, for place scholars, a community is just another place to consider the relationships between humans and their localities, another setting to examine attachment to place or sense of place—it is mainly an issue of scale. For community sociologists, on the other hand, the community is the setting for particular types of social relationships that vary from those in other kinds of locales. For them, attachment is one of many community dynamics to consider; others include, for example, the social structure of the community including the normative order, power, inequality, networks, and communication. In other words, for place scholars, community attachment can be seen as attachment to a type of place, while for community sociologists, community attachment is one of many social dynamics within a community. (p. 203)

Community studies often pay homage to a landmark study produced by Kasardra and Janowitz (1974). The authors of this historical project compared two competing models to understand community; linear and systemic. Kasardra and Janowitz conducted the study in England to provide recommendations for restructuring of the size of local governments. The linear model proposed that social bonds would deteriorate with increased community size and density, while the systemic model depicted community attachment to be more fluid. Findings of this study depicted that length of residence (strongest predictor), along with social (class) status, and life-cycle (age) were the strongest predictors of social bonds. Further, the study showed that population size and

density did not significantly weaken friendships or other social bonds, thus confirming the systemic model. Researchers from many fields have taken a keen interest in studying community attachment since the publication of Kasarda and Janowitz's study.

One theory to emerge from community studies has been the psychological sense of community (PSOC). McMillian and Chavis (1986), the authors credited with its theoretical development, defined key aspects of PSOC to be membership, integration and fulfillment, influence, and emotional connection. Membership involves boundaries of acceptance, a sense of belonging, and a common symbol system for communication and social behavior. The aspect of influence details how members feel influential in the group, how the community has influence to conform members, and how these influences work for individuals and groups. Integration and fulfillment is a valuable dimension that serves to reinforce community and individuals, and further depicts how people work together to meet needs. Lastly, shared emotional connection is an aspect that encapsulates quality social interaction, shared values, and spiritual bonds. McMillian and Chavis strongly claimed that theories regarding sense of community or community attachment needed solid theoretical foundations of which to build research upon, and their work delivered just that.

The sense of community index (SCI) is the most widely used scale to measure PSOC (Long & Perkins, 2003). Items within the SCI have been confirmed to represent the original four dimensions of PSOC as articulated by McMillian and Chavis (Chipuer & Pretty, 1999). The SCI scale is not without debate, however. Researchers have examined its ability to measure the original theory of PSOC, and attempted to reconstruct it (Peterson, 2008), and have also proposed shorter versions (Long & Perkins, 2003).

However, researchers spanning a wide array of disciplines believe the SCI scale to be very useful.

Typically, the SCI is used to measure social connections and belonging within communities and neighborhoods (Trentleman, 2009). McMillian and Chavis (1986) believed that PSOC provided a way to understand how to create better communities. They hoped to use PSOC as a tool to build communities on trust and faith and not on fear and hatred. Recently, researchers have found that PSOC is correlated with positive neighboring, collective efficacy in community, civic participation, and communitarism (Perkins & Long, 2002). Thus, it seems that understanding PSOC can be a vital part to rebuilding achieving goals like McMillain and Chavis desired.

The literature using PSOC has depicted correlations with other important social concepts (Manzo & Perkins, 2006). Further, some researchers have even raised the question if PSOC is part of a larger concept like social capital (Perkins & Long, 2002). Such questions are yet to be fully answered, but many have called for integrating PSOC with place attachment and social capital theory (Mihaylov & Perkins, 2014; Manzo & Perkins, 2006; Perkins & Long, 2002). The SCI itself does take into account what some believe to be items regarding place attachment (Long & Perkins, 2003). Further, items that refer to social bonding seem to overlap with social capital theory. It seems that PSOC may be at a turning point as research projects need to, at the very least, have an understanding of how place attachment, social capital, PSOC, and other concepts are related.

Perkins and Long (2002) pointed out that place attachment, collective efficacy, civic participation, block satisfaction, neighboring behavior, and communitiriasim all

serve as predictors of PSOC. As with place attachment, length of residence, socio-economic and demographic information, and age also predict PSOC. Thus, when constructing studies measuring PSOC one must take into account all of these factors.

Understanding individual and communal PSOC can serve as a vital tool for improving towns, cities, and rural areas (McMillian & Chavis, 1986). New ideas and variables would serve community developers, urban planners, and researchers well. For example, Francis (2012) depicted how quality of public open spaces, shops, and community centers was correlated with high individual PSOC. This research directly calls attention to what many advocates believe about PSOC; that the construct can generally help understand members satisfaction and general quality of life within their community. I believe this theory can help identify the social benefits, or lack thereof, that third places have on community members (e.g., Oldenburg, 1999). Thus, I will examine PSOC and third place participation together.

CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

Crotty (1998) stated that researchers should provide answers to two things when developing a research proposal. First, the researcher has to describe the methodologies and methods that will be employed in the study. Second, the researcher must justify the choice and use of such methods. This chapter will focus mainly on the former, but will first provide justification for the selection of such methods. This chapter outlines the following: 1) personal epistemology - a view of knowledge that is embedded throughout and guides the study, 2) theoretical perspective - the philosophical stance informing the methodology that is informed by the stated epistemology, 3) methodology - the strategies and designs lying behind the choice of particular methods, and 4) methods - the techniques and procedures used to gather and analyze data (Crotty, 1998).

Epistemological Stance

I believe that knowledge is socially constructed. This report, therefore, is not the *truth* regarding the concept of third place or its benefits. Plainly stated, this report does not claim that the methods used will lead to the discovery of an objective truth. Instead, I view this project as a way to create dialogue surrounding important social issues. It is my hope that the conversation brought forth through this dialogue will not be immobile or stagnant, but rather be a lively and changing discussion that challenges injustices or unfairness of the social issues examined (Madison, 2012). I hope to do so in a rigorous and scientific manner. However, I am more concerned that this report remains close to the reality of the social phenomena I am studying, and not become an artifact of the methods used (Adorno, 1957).

My view of knowledge is different from positivistic views of social science, but is specifically appropriate for *social* science. For example, positivism has generally considered things like emotions or subjective experience to be meaningless, and instead has followed the work of August Comte (1798 – 1857) that focused only on things that can be scientifically established using observation, experimentation, and enumeration. I would have to agree with Blummer (1969) who doubted human society could be analyzed in such a manner because it fails to recognize humans as they are, namely, interpretive, emotional, and cognitive beings. Thus, a study such as this should be grounded in a view of knowledge that takes human nature (e.g. emotions, ideas, opinions, behaviors, etc.) into account. Therefore, this report is specifically focused on the social reality of the participants as it relates to third places in a community. The social constructionist view of knowledge allowed me to address issues such as individuals' feelings and ascribed meanings regarding Village Pub. Crotty (1998), in his work on the foundations of social research, stated this point wonderfully:

That social realities are socially constructed is something of a truism. The most ardent positivist would find that hard to contradict. What distinguishes constructionism, setting it over against the objectivism inherent in the positivists stance, is its understanding that *all* meaningful reality, precisely as meaningful reality, is socially constructed. (p. 55, original emphasis).

Theoretical Perspective

My view of knowledge informs my theoretical perspective, critical urban theory. Critical urban theory is, as noted in the previous chapter, birthed out of critical theory. Critical theorists, like social constructionists, believe knowledge has historical, cultural, and

human dimensions (Crotty, 1998). However, critical theorists are highly suspicious of ideologies that shape social life, and these theorists are also constantly seeking to call attention to injustices caused by ideologies or other forms of oppression (Hemingway, 1999a). More plainly stated, I believe that knowledge is socially constructed, but also believe that people often live in social circumstances shaped by ideologies or relations of power that are oppressive.

Critical urban theory, a new specified branch of critical theory, provides a theoretical perspective to highlight the ideology of suburbanization. I used critical urban theory to highlight a different form of leisure activity than is usually promoted in suburban developments (i.e. spending time with others in public places). Thus, I depicted an alternative emancipatory form of urbanism outside of the suburban lifestyle (Brenner, 2009). Critical urban theory aligns neatly with Oldenburg's (1999) arguments for remembering and advocating for America's great gathering spaces, and was therefore used as a theoretical perspective in the current study.

Methodology and Methods

Two articles comprised this study, and are presented in Chapters Four and Five respectively. These articles were guided by critical urban theory, which is informed by a social constructionist view of knowledge, but will implement different methodologies and methods. Chapter Six provides a general summary of the entire project, thus encapsulating findings from both articles. However, for clarity and specificity the methodologies of the two articles were detailed separately.

The purpose of this project was twofold: 1) to compare a contemporary-prototypical third place with Oldenburg's third place characteristics, and 2) to examine

Oldenburg's claim that third place participation fosters social benefits. To achieve this, the articles took separate approaches. Chapter Four provided detailed descriptions of behaviors, practices, and social meaning making processes of participants and staff of Village Pub. Chapter Five compared community members' perceptions and participation in local third places with SOP and SOC. These two articles examine the concept of third place from different angles, thus the summary in Chapter Six provides an understanding of individual and communal benefits of third place participation.

Ethnography of Village Pub

My goal in Chapter Four was to provide a vivid description of culture, individual meanings, and behaviors within a contemporary-prototypical third place. Generally, I wanted to provide a cultural portrait of Village Pub (Creswell, 2013). Encapsulating an entire social world, with all its social actors, requires a considerable amount of time, but also requires that the researcher gain a degree of 'insider' status. Ethnography is a methodology that is well-suited to capturing an *emic*, or inside, view of such a social situation (Wolcott, 1999). Therefore, the first article was guided by an ethnographic methodology.

Wolcott (1999) stated ethnography is more than a method, technique, or manner in which to collect data, it is a way of seeing. Ethnographers attempt to understand what people of a particular time and place do, the meanings they ascribe to what they do, and to present that description in a manner that draws attention to regularities that implicate cultural process. This way of seeing allows researchers to account for the personal experiences of what it is like to be in the environment being studied. Wolcott (1999) argued that positivistic researchers no longer appreciate or trust what each of us

accomplishes through personal experience. Ethnographers embrace the potential of subjective experiences in order to maximize the potential of being in the environment studied.

The ideal unit of study in ethnography is one of something, whether it is one village, or one bar (Wolcott, 1999). “What can we learn from studying only a single case of something? All we can,” Wolcott argued. Ethnographic accounts typically represent a small sample size, when compared to large statistical analyses. However, this is not a fault of ethnographic work, but its strength. An ethnographic study can provide rich detail and description of human behavior, communal practices, and social action.

Ethnographers gain the details that will help describe the culture of their environment through fieldwork. Fieldwork requires a researcher to be present in the investigation, to touch, to feel, to sense things, and to document these things. Thus, an ethnographer attempts to see the world as other ethnographers would. They *see* the details that would otherwise go unaccounted for with other research methods. Ethnography is a way of seeing the world, thus it serves as a guiding methodology for Chapter Four. However, it ethnography is also a way of looking according to Wolcott. Here, Wolcott is referring no longer to an overarching methodology, but instead the techniques of collecting data.

Wolcott (1999) outlined an ethnographer’s ways of looking as experiencing, inquiring, and examining. Researchers often assume the role of a participant-observer who experiences the social setting as participants would, but also have a role as a researcher who is observing their experiences. Much can be gained from experiences, so much in fact, Wolcott (1999) argued that firsthand experience is the starting point and filter through which everything else is screened as researchers make sense of what they

observed. For example, if participants alluded to the importance of a particular event in interviews, the ethnographer may be able to reflect upon his/her firsthand experiences of the event to understand how others displayed behaviors that align with interview statements. Ethnographers take a more active role when they stop observing what is going on, and ask about what is going on. This act of inquiry usually takes the form of an interview. Interviews can take many forms, like semi-structured, oral history, casual, etc., and all of these formats allow researchers to gain specific answers to specific questions. Lastly, ethnographers often examine materials produced by others that may help provide a more complete picture of the setting studied. Ethnographic studies can often be enriched by oral history of key people, old photographs, personal journals, etc.

Critical ethnography is the performance of critical theory (Madison, 2012). I consider the ethnography of Village Pub to not only be creating dialogue within academic communities, but also within the Village Pub itself. Madison (2012) warned researchers embarking upon critical ethnography to be conscious of their own position, subjectivity, and objectivity. Therefore, it is fair to point out that I am a proponent of third places, and believe in and long for the social and individual benefits Oldenburg (1999) claimed third places could produce. Madison (2012) also argued for researchers to represent their participants and their studied communities with a high level of ethical and political conviction. The present study was guided by the political conviction that urban planning policy is often unjust, that citizens often have no say in the development of their urban environment, that contemporary urban planning often leads to gentrification issues, and that third places are generally disappearing. Thus, I feel it is important to ask critical questions of regarding participants' urban environment, the lack of third places, and

ethnic and class issues as it pertains to third place participation. The current study will incorporate Madison's teachings by striving to be reflexive, to unmask injustices regarding urban place issues, and to represent participants as ethically as possible.

Setting

Village Pub is located in an 'up and coming' neighborhood in Nashville, TN. The bar sits on a large lot that features a gravel parking lot that wraps around the east and south sides of the building. Village Pub is located near a four-way intersection that features a gas station, a record shop, a Japanese restaurant, and a local business on the respective four corners. In close proximity to the four-way intersection there is a coffee shop, a deli, a local lunch destination, and a few more local businesses. This specific area receives traffic throughout all parts of the day. Village Pub sits in the midst of an area that is surrounded by homes, neighborhoods, schools and churches, but is also less than a ten minute commute away from the city's large business district. This location, along with the aesthetics of the building, gives this establishment a 'neighborhood bar' feel.

The bar resembles a bungalow, a style of house that is common in this area of the city. Brown oak is the main color that one observes from the outside, but the building also has a green trim. Handicap spaces and parking for bicycles are immediately in front of the entrance to the bar. Village Pub features a wrap around porch that is insulated (with a drape-like mechanism that encloses the porch) and heated in the winter months, and open in spring and summer. The inside of Village Pub features a classic "U" shaped bar, which has an entry way for employees to step behind the bar, with seating on all sides. There is one main room that features several two-top tables, and a larger table that is tucked into the corner of the room. Also, one other room exists for seating. This other

room features a few two-tops and a four-top table. The décor inside is comprised of local brewery and sport memorabilia, and also a few chalkboards that feature the sandwich specials and beers on tap. The bar, floor, and walls are trimmed in the light oak color. Draft beers are served in either glass pints or 24-ounce mugs. Cocktails, called mules, are served in steel goblets. The inside is usually dimly lit. Generally, Village Pub's inside layout resembles the floor plan of a house. There are mainly two rooms that have protruding walls, and are separated by an archway much like a living room, kitchen, and dining room would be.

Participants

My main role as the researcher was that of a participant-observer (Wolcott, 1999). This role allowed me to observe the Village Pub often, but also gain the trust and collaboration of participants for the study. I gained some sort of insider status during my study, and this paid dividends for attracting participants to the study. I interviewed regular patrons of Village Pub for my main source of data. Regular patrons were able to depict an insider's perspective on reasons for participation, socially constructed meanings of Village Pub, etc.

Early ethnographic reconnaissance provided preliminary data on the participants. Field notes constructed from participant observations depicted that regular patrons at Village Pub are mostly white males. For example, here is one observation, "Around the bar tonight sat two white middle-to-late aged men on my left, a white male who looked to be in his late twenties or early thirties on my right, and then there was two white middle aged women who were replaced by Jordan, a white male who is a regular." The staff of Village Pub is exclusively white. Staff consists of two bar tenders are white males, four

white female servers, two white male kitchen employees, and the co-owners are both white males.

Data Collection

Data collection methods consisted of interviewing participants, constructing field notes from observations and participation, and analysis of other artifacts related to Village Pub. Wolcott (1999) outlined a process for collecting and transforming qualitative data known as the D-A-I process (description, analysis, interpretation). Description answers the question, “What is going on here?” (Wolcott, 1999). Observation will mainly provide the answers to the questions of what is going on at Village Pub. As suggested by Wolcott (1994, 2008), I erred on the side of too much description rather than too little. Wolcott argued that qualitative researchers have no magic formula to the description process, but rather they should contemplate whether the data collected is relevant to the ethnographic question. Thus, my description of Village Pub focused on social actors and their feelings, ascribed meanings, and behaviors that confirm or deny Village Pub as a third place. First, however, I focused on describing Village Pub as comprehensively as possible. This description came through field notes mainly.

Field notes were constructed from the basis of observation. I took mental note of ongoing scenes, interactions, or important moments while in the field by creating “jottings” (Emerson, Fretz & Shaw, 1995). These jottings were recorded on my personal cellular phone. This method to be preferable because it allowed my notes to go unnoticed as cell phone activity is a normal activity for patrons. Emerson and colleagues (1995) suggested that jottings serve as head notes that can be extrapolated during full field note construction, and I applied that technique.

Participant interviews also allowed for description. The examination of relevant artifacts helped paint a picture of Village Pub. Interviewing, as stated earlier, signals a shift in the researcher's intention from observing what is going on to asking. Therefore, the interview process provided description of participants' thoughts regarding the research questions, and also provided some answers to specific questions regarding Village Pub.

As stated, critical urban theory is the theoretical perspective that guided this investigation. Therefore, my description paid attention to things that encourage or discourage certain patrons, behaviors, or uses of Village Pub. Further, interview questions were formed with a focus on investigating issues such as: subjective meaning of Village Pub, comparison of Village Pub to other places in community, reasons for patronizing Village Pub opposed to other places, demographics of Village Pub, etc. For example, questions like "Can you describe the demographics of regular patrons of Village Pub?", or "What role, if any, does Village Pub play in fostering relationships between neighbors in this community?" were asked. I intended for my study to call participants' attention to lack of third places in the studied community, the possible benefits of third place participation, and also issues of ethnicity within Village Pub. These interviews were recorded on an audio recording device with the permission of the participants. The interviews were transcribed and analyzed, and these techniques are described in the next section.

The study focused on description, but offered analysis and interpretation as well. The interview process allowed the researcher to gain specific answers to questions regarding the happenings within Village Pub. Johnson and Samdahl (2005) provided an

example of such work when they described how a country-western gay bar had dramatically different behaviors and practices on “lesbian night”. The researchers of the 2005 study felt inclined to ask why this was the case, and found that gay men held very negative views of lesbian nights for various reasons. Johnson and Samdahl were able to couple interviews and observations to provide specific answers to how things worked in the bar. I, like Johnson and Samdahl, asked specific questions to gain specific answers during interviews. This allowed me to move from describing the social environment to providing some analysis of how things work.

The time invested in Village Pub as a participant-observer equated to roughly 18 months. The first six months focused on heavy description of physical, social, and subjective experiences of the researcher. During the final twelve months, the researcher became more involved by frequenting Village Pub 2-3 times a week at different times and days. Also, I began to focus description on answering the research questions. I took more active role in asking questions and interviewing participants during this time period (Wolcott, 1999).

Data Analysis

I loosely followed Creswell’s (2013) description for analyzing qualitative data. I loosely followed these steps because at times I became more detailed in certain techniques (i.e. coding, memo writing, and possibly restarting the process). Further, I was aware of Wolcott’s keen observations of what analysis of qualitative data truly is. Wolcott (1994) made the distinction between data management and analysis, and stated often things such as coding (so often thought of as analyzing) is a function of data management and not

analysis. I resist the urge to draw such distinctions here, though I embrace them, to make my data analysis methods clear.

Creswell (2013) stated there are several stages to analyzing ethnographic data. The following are the steps Creswell outlined: data organization, reading and memoing, describing the data into codes, classifying the data into codes, interpreting the data, and representing the data. I worked through these steps as detailed below.

Data organization consisted of creating expanded field notes, and at later dates interviews. After creating this data, I read over the transcriptions making initial and preliminary codes. However, I continued to focus on the description of the social setting, the actors, the actors' behaviors, events, etc. through more field notes. I then formed secondary codes that encapsulate my initial codes, and developed memos to clarify my position on these codes. These memos were compared with the data in order to solidify the claims.

I conducted interview transcription after a considerable amount of time of field note creation and analysis. These transcriptions were subjected to the same process of organization, reading, coding, and memoing. I also clarified findings with participants through additional interviews.

Lastly, I stayed close to Wolcott's (1994) description-analysis-interpretation process. Wolcott advocates focusing on description in an ethnographic study, especially for less experienced researchers. Therefore, when applying Creswell's (2013) final two steps to the analysis process, interpreting and representing the data, I focused mostly on the description. Specifically, as Creswell suggests, I made sense of how the culture worked, but did so through description. Lastly, I represented the data through narrative

presentation, and offered what Van Maanen (1988) calls a realist tale in favor of description.

Trustworthiness

Throughout the study steps were taken to improve the trustworthiness of the data. I frequently checked with participants to acquire feedback and confirmation of the data I collected, a technique known as member checking. Further, I enlisted the help of the contributing authors and fellow ethnographers when interpreting and representing the data generated by this study. Again, I do not claim this study to be *The truth* regarding the Village Pub, nor do I hide my affinity for cold beer, good conversation, and great third places. Rather, I intended to represent Village Pub and its participants as best as possible, and strive to be reflexive of my own positionality, subjectivity, and objectivity (Madison, 2012).

The following are the research questions for Chapter Four:

1. What characteristics, behaviors, attached meanings, and associated benefits best characterize The Village Pub?
2. How do the findings compare to Oldenburg's conceptualization of third place?

Social Survey

Critical urban theory is concerned with providing emancipatory forms of urbanism (Brenner, 2009). The current study conceptualized third place participation as a leisure opportunity that provides a way to play (Cheang, 2002; Mair, 2009), an activity that offers social support to citizens (Rosenbaum, 2007; Glover & Parry, 2009), and a way to establish social norms in the community (Oldenburg, 1999). Thus, third place participation is a leisure opportunity that offers individual and communal benefits within

urban settings (Oldenburg, 1999; Teiman, 2008; Slater & Koo, 2010). Traditional third places like libraries (Lawson, 2004), bookstores (Laing & Royle, 2013), and coffee shops (Simon, 2009) face difficulties in fostering authentic third place environments, however. The theoretical perspective of critical urban theory guides this project to investigate third place participation as a free and productive leisure activity that is under threat. This study will examine the potential benefits of third place participation in hopes to call attention to the ways third place participation can benefit citizens.

Chapter Five was guided by a methodology of survey research. Oldenburg (1999) made claims that third place participation would lead to social benefits, including friends by the set, participation in civic/democratic activities, a more socialized society, a community that cares more for their environment, and community members feeling more attached to their local neighborhood. The purpose of this article was to examine Oldenburg's claims by conducting survey research.

Survey research has provided some of the most important studies regarding issues of place within neighborhoods (Hidalgo & Hernandez, 2001), and sense of community within urban areas (Kasarda & Janowitz; 1974). By conducting survey research, these researchers were able to analyze communities and groups of people. Chapter Four presents an understanding of a particular place and the people who inhabit it. However, this provides an understanding of just one place and the people who patronize it. Therefore, by extending analysis into the community at large, I was able to address issues the ethnography of Village Pub may not.

Sense of place and SOC are both powerful concepts for understanding social dynamics within communities (Manzo & Perkins, 2006). More importantly, third place

participation has been linked with these concepts, but never empirically tested. For example, Oldenburg (1999) stated that third place participation might foster social connections, or help develop a connection to the community. Jefferes, Bracken, Jian and Casey (2009) provided findings that third place participation and perceived availability of third places had a positive impact on quality of life. Further, Francis, Giles-Corti, Wood & Knuiiman (2012) depicted that access to public open space had a positive effect on sense of community. However, there has yet to be any research that has investigated the relationship between third place use and SOC/SOP.

Survey Items

The survey was comprised of four sections. The first section of the survey will ask an open-ended question regarding community members' available third places. Jefferes, Bracken, Jian & Casey (2009) demonstrated success in comparing answers to open ended questions regarding third place, and quality of life measurements. The current study will use Jefferes and colleagues' (2009) survey following survey question to measure third place perceptions, "What are the opportunities for communication in public places in your neighborhood, for example, places where people might chat informally or where friends and neighbors might go for a conversation?" The remaining items in the first section were follow up questions regarding third place participation and behaviors. Specifically, participants will be asked to rank their favorite places, and describe the frequency of their patronage.

Sections two and three of the survey measured SOP and SOC. Manzo & Perkins (2006) argued that SOP and SOC are both critical parts of person-environment transactions that develop community (see also Perkins & Long, 2002). Therefore, both of

these concepts are important to understanding communal benefits, and both of these concepts needed to be examined in regards to third place participation. The survey measured SOP using the four-dimensional model put forth by Kyle and colleagues (Kyle, Mowen & Tarrant, 2004), and this was used because it measures the dynamic nature of human-place bonding (Jorgensen, 2001). I chose to use the BSCI to measure SOC due to the good model fit found by Long & Perkins (2003), and also because its lack of place items to avoid redundancy.

Section four of this survey collected items that predict and contribute to SOP and SOC (see Lewicka, 2011; Long & Perking, 2007). This information allowed for statistical control over confounding variables to ensure our correlations are meaningful to the purpose of the study. Thus, section four allowed the researchers to confidently reject or accept the hypotheses.

Setting and Sample

The survey was administered in East Nashville, TN. The city of Nashville has received widespread attention for being a community that is on the rise, and has been proclaimed the 'it' city by national media outlets such as *Time* (Meacham, 2014). As stated, in the first article, this community has been exposed to many redevelopment projects over the last decade (Llyod, 2011). Llyod (2011) depicted tensions between newer, (mostly white, middle class, well-educated) and, older inhabitants, (largely African-American, Latino, and Middle Eastern, working class). Therefore, one can assert that gentrification, urbanization, and place politics are issues in this community. Thus, I argue this community is ripe not only for the study of third place participation, but also for critical theory.

The sample used in Chapter Five attempted to represent the population of the community under investigation. The community under investigation is described below by statistics obtained through the United States census and tax information. Table 1 represents the two zip codes that completely encapsulate the community under investigation. The researcher attempted to represent the population accurately. This type of sampling is referred to as quota sampling, and seeks to gain a sample of participants that is representative of the community population. For example, below Table 1 indicates that African Americans and whites make up the large majority of the population while a Hispanic population is the next biggest majority, thus the survey sample should reflect that.

Table 1. *Demographic Information of East Nashville*

Total population	43,547
White	25,257
African American or Black	15,818
Native American Indian or Alaskan	152
Asian	452
Pacific	33
Hispanic	818
Other	1,017
Two race	1,905
Males over 18 years	16,579
Females over 18 years	17,896

Data Collection

The drop off, pick up method was used for collecting data. Specifically, the drop off, pick up method is conducted by researchers going door to door and pitching their survey to community members, then the researchers will return to pick up the survey a within a few days. This method has been shown to increase response rates in urban community studies (Steele, Bourke, Luloff, Liao, Theodori & Krannich, 2001) and studies regarding place theory (Trentleman, 2011). For example, Trentleman reported a response percentage rate of 83.7, 86.5, and 80.9 percent in his three counties surveyed in 2011. The current study was concerned with collecting a large sample of participants from the community, thus the drop off pick up method was employed.

Data Analysis

Data obtained through surveys was entered into SPSS for analysis. The researcher coded data for entry, defined and labeled variables, formulated a codebook, entered the data, ran the descriptive statistics, and checked the descriptive statistics for irregularities. The data entry process allowed the researcher to discard faulty or incomplete surveys, prepare the data for analysis, and check for normality among variables.

The purpose of Chapter Five was to examine the relationship(s) between the third place participation and SOP/SOC. Thus, the researcher analyzed the data using the statistical techniques of correlation. Specifically, the researcher examined the relationship between one dependent variable (third place participation), and two independent variables (SOC and SOC), thus two multiple regression analyses were run. The multiple regressions not only allowed for examining the relationship between the dependent and independent variables, but also allowed for prediction based upon findings.

The methodology of large-scale survey research guided Chapter Five. Although predicated on precise measurement, this article was informed by an epistemology of social constructionism. Moreover, the purpose of this article was to critically examine the relationship between social benefits and third place behaviors. This investigation will need a large, diverse sample to complete this task, and that is precisely why the exact setting has been chosen. The following are research questions that will guide this study.

- 1) Is there a significant relationship between the dependent variable (SOP in model 1, SOC in model 2) and the independent variables taken as a set?
- 2) How strong is the relationship between the dependent variable and the predictor variables?
- 3) What is the direction of the relationship between the variables?

CHAPTER IV
CONVERSATIONS OVER A BEER: A CRITICAL STUDY OF
SUBURBANIZATION AND ITS EFFECTS ON LEISURE

From 1950-1996 the amount of Americans who lived in suburbs doubled, while the amount that lived in rural or metropolitan areas decreased (Putnam, 2000). This suburban sprawl was the direct result of policies, programs, and initiatives to shape American towns into segregated components (i.e. housing subdivisions, shopping centers, office parks). For example, government programs for housing and highways promoted sprawl after World War II, and zoning laws were then quickly made to fit nicely with the suburbanization of America (Duany, Plater-Zyberk & Speck, 2000; Jacobs, 1961). There is no doubt that the ideology of suburbanization has reshaped the physical landscape of America, and it reshaped the social landscape as well.

The problem with suburbanization is that it promotes social isolation. For example, one spends more time alone in a car commuting from place to place in a suburb because homes, work places, and businesses are all separated into different sections of the community (Putnam, 2000). Furthermore, suburban planning does not favor creating public gathering places in close proximity to homes, thus informal public life and has declined as sprawl has increased (Oldenburg, 1999). Plainly stated, the widespread sprawl mentioned above is correlated with declines in civic engagement (Putnam, 2000), and encourages citizens to pursue isolated, individualistic leisure activities (Bellah, Madsen, Sullivan, Swidler & Tipton, 1985).

Informed by the arguments above, this study used critical urban theory as a guiding theoretical perspective. Critical urban theory involves the critique of ideologies

and power structures within and among cities (Brenner, 2009). Specifically, this study critiques the ideology of suburbanization and the individualistic, consumptive forms of leisure that it promotes. Therefore, this article highlights a different type of leisure practice, and also describes a gathering place that fosters such communal leisure.

Purpose and Research Questions

The purpose of this project was to provide a vivid description of a prototypical third place, The Village Pub (the pub, as locals call it), and compare the findings with Oldenburg's articulation of the concept. Oldenburg (1999) described third places as environments outside the home (first place) and work (second place) that offer welcoming settings for people to spend free time with friends, neighbors, and fellow citizens. The authors used the data to examine the relevance of the third place concept in regards to providing communal leisure opportunities. The following questions guided the study:

1. What characteristics, behaviors, attached meanings, and associated benefits best characterize The Village Pub?
2. How do the findings compare to Oldenburg's conceptualization of third place?

Leisure as Shared Practice

Arai & Pedlar (2003) argued that leisure is pursued for two reasons. First, individuals may engage a leisure activity for consumption. This use of leisure is tied to individuals' ability to exercise rights and choice, and often individuals choose leisure activities that are beneficial primarily to the individual. The second reason was to engage in leisure is as shared practice. Leisure as a shared practice encapsulates the communitarian ideal that leisure can be used for not only individual benefits, but also for the common good of the

community. Many leisure scholars have argued that this communitarian ideal encapsulates the potential of leisure, and that such practices can foster friendships, civic engagement, and strengthen stocks of social capital (Glover & Hemingway, 2005; Hemingway, 1999a). Arai and Pedlar illustrated the difference between individualistic and communal approaches to leisure by comparing listening to music alone and engaging music within a group setting. In the choir the individual is engaged within a group, that is the individual is involved in means and the ends of leisure, and is part of the collective. However, with a compact disk the individual often experiences music alone. Here the means is separated from the ends, and the individual from the community (Arai & Pedlar, 2003).

Unfortunately, Americans have favored the individualistic outlook leisure in recent decades (Bellah, Madsen, Sullivan, Swidler & Tipton, 1985; Putnam, 2000). People are now less engaged in political, religious, civic, community, and informal organizations and groups. Putnam (2000) argued when people frequently spend time in the company of others they develop trust, social norms and networks. Therefore, citizens can then resolve collective problems easily, communities advance smoothly, and we all become more aware of how our fates are linked. There are many factors (i.e. generational changes, advances in technology and mass media, pressure of time and money, and, of course, the rise of mobility and sprawl) that led to the decline of civic engagement, but the researchers argue there are modern environments that can still provide the benefits of communal leisure. Thus, it is vital that leisure research investigates urban places that can foster casual, informal public life (Johnson & Glover, 2013).

Third Place

The study uses the concept of third place to guide the investigation into communal leisure practices in an urban environment. As stated, prototypical third places (e.g. French café, English pub, barber shops) offer people individual and communal benefits (Oldenburg, 1999). For example, patrons enjoy novel leisure experiences, socialize with old friends, and even gain new friends in a third place (Cheang, 2002; Hawkins & Ryan, 2013).

These benefits are made possible by the characteristics of third places. All third places have regulars, are accessible to the community, maintain a playful environment, and conversation is always the main activity. It is easy to see why Oldenburg thought such places might help address the problems of antisocial leisure behaviors that is prevalent in suburban developments (Duany, Plater-Zyberk & Speck, 2000; Putnam, 2000).

Unfortunately, the third place concept has received more attention outside the field of leisure studies than within (e.g., Cheng; 2006; Hawkins & Ryan, 2013; Rosenbaum, 2006). This is unfortunate because leisure scholars should be the ones highlighting the emancipatory power of such leisure practices (Hemingway, 1999b). However, there are just a few fine examples from within the field. For instance, Mair (2009) depicted the unique, festive behaviors of citizens at a rural curling (sport much like shuffleboard) club, and depicted the special relationships and meanings that developed through members' participation. Glover and Parry (2009) detailed how patients were motivated to frequent Gilda's club, a club for individuals with cancer, because they received emotional support and encouragement unavailable elsewhere. There have been many other studies within the field that focus on how specific places can foster communal leisure (e.g. Glover, 2004; Henderson, 1999), but the authors argue that

leisure studies could benefit from the explicit use of the third place concept. Third place research highlights the benefits of informal public life, and this aligns nicely with the potential of leisure captured in the communitarian perspective.

Leisure is the prime platform for addressing the fractured social nature of our communities because it provides the opportunity for citizens to choose to be civically engaged or to participate in shared practice (Hemingway, 1999). Many leisure scholars have taken notice of this fact and offered fascinating accounts of unique environments that provide a sense of belonging, a network of friends, and generally bring people together around a common good (Johnson, 2005; Dunlap, 2009; Lashua & Fox, 2006; Glover & Parry, 2009; Mair, 2009). Such exploratory studies of modern environments help identify ways to facilitate communal leisure practices, and in so doing may help restore social connections, trust, and mutual understandings in our communities. This study continues this line of work by using the third place concept to guide the findings of the study in hopes to highlight places that foster communal leisure.

My truck rolled down Riverside Drive as I had opted for the more scenic route home. It was a beautiful fall day full of light yellow and burnt orange colors wherever I looked, but I had not enjoyed it yet. I had been stuck inside the grayish-blue walls of the university all day. It became an easy decision to postpone the inevitable silence of my apartment. Thus, I continued east down the snaky road heading for the Village Pub.

Riverside Village, the pocket of development where the pub resides, was lively as I rolled in. I noticed customers exiting the record store, pedestrians crossing the street, and people lingering outside the coffee shop/ice cream parlor. The porch that wraps

around the chocolate and peanut butter bungalow that is the pub was filled with a mixture of trendy dressers and come-as-you-are types, so the pub seemed to be busy as normal for this time of day.

For me, the Village Pub was the real life embodiment of the show “Cheers”. The pub was a place where people care to know your name, and I very much wanted to belong to a place such as that. In fact, I was so infatuated with the idea I chose to integrate myself into the pub and document the experience.

“Hey, sit wherever you like,” was the call as I entered the pub. It was a very welcoming invitation, but I realized it would take more than a few visits to become known on a first name basis. My eyes took a few seconds to adjust to the dimly lit interior, and once they did I could see the pub was half-filled with middle-aged, white males. There was plenty of room at the beautiful, oak bar, and I knew that sitting there would provide some opportunities for banter.

I plopped down, and sighed deeply as if to signify the end of my workday and the start of something else. Brandon, the tall, balding bartender, introduced himself, shook my hand, and handed me a beer menu full of local, craft beer. He had offered a food menu, but I declined remembering my stockpile of Chunky soup at home. The pub is not cheap for a graduate student, but the prices seem to influence the atmosphere in which people rarely stand or order shots. Instead, patrons slowly enjoy their craft brews and pretzel sandwiches, and engage in conversations that are loud enough to be heard but soft enough to be ignored.

Like many nights to come, I sipped on a local IPA and engaged in passing discussions with the staff and others at the bar. This particular evening, however, I

noticed something I had been hoping to discover, regulars. There was a group of three men and one woman that stuck out. The staff knew them all by first name, and even Jesse, the owner, would occasionally break from his tireless patrolling of the pub to congregate around the group.

The life of the party was a gentleman named Terry. Terry is a tall, stocky, former marine who is very sociable in a gentle way. He had come with his girlfriend, Ruth, a dirty blonde in her thirties, and had unexpectedly met two other gentlemen. It was obvious that Terry was well-acquainted with these other men, Joseph, an extremely funny yet intelligent six-foot tall Asian American, and Paul, an opinionated white male who wears glasses with square frames. I came to know these regulars over the course of the next year hanging around the pub, but this was one of my first interactions with them.

Terry's body language seemed to be inviting me to join the group's conversations. He kept his shoulders open to me even though we were sitting on the same side of the bar. Also, his voice grew slightly to ensure that others outside the group could hear their playful conversation. Eventually, he made eye contact with me after posing a question, which was actually more of a statement.

"There's no comparing today's crap with classic rock, right?"

"When you're right, you're right," I said tipping my glass as if to salute him.

I immediately thought of a million better replies to Terry's question, but to my relief everyone laughed at my remark. The group talked about highlights that flashed on the flat screen above the drafts, iPhone updates, and laughed about the eccentric play list that stretched from Prince to Nirvana. I no longer felt awkward commenting on something the group said, but not comfortable enough to start a new line of conversation.

I slowly sipped my drafts, and stayed longer than I would have if not rubbing shoulders with regulars.

I had been at the bar for an hour and a half, and had decided to call it an evening. Brandon was half way to the tap as he asked if I wanted another, and his head sunk as I asked for my tab instead. He shook my hand, called me by name, and wished me a good evening after sliding my check over.

“See ya,” I said gently after sliding off the stool and patting Terry on the back.

“Hey man, we’ll see ya,” Terry said pausing mid-joke to acknowledge me.

Ruth, Joseph, and Paul whispered farewells in sequence as I passed them as not to interrupt Terry who had started back in on his joke.

Methodology

This study used critical ethnography as a guiding methodology. Critical ethnography is the doing of critical theory (Madison, 2012). Critical theory seeks to unmask injustices, combat oppression, and call attention to social givens (Hemingway, 1999). Original critical theorists argued against the idea of objectivity, and postulated that all theory is contingent upon its historical moment and rooted in some sort of ideology (Horkheimer, 1937). More recently, critical theory has been a way to critique social norms or knowledge taken for granted, thus creating dialogue about what is right, wrong, or true (e.g. Foucault, 1997; Freire, 1970). Thus, the study was intended to have a practical impact on the way people think about public places and communal leisure, and challenge social norms surrounding these topics.

The theoretical perspective of critical urban theory guided this article. Critical urban theory critiques the ideologies, injustices, and power structures that shape and influence social life and knowledge within cities (Brenner, 2009). Specifically, the researchers chose to critique the ideology of suburbanization that facilitates the individualistic view of leisure and leaves no room for informal public life. Thus, the highlights the communitarian approach to leisure (Aria & Pedlar, 2003; Hemingway, 1988) and the concept of third place (Oldenburg, 1999) by providing a detailed account of communal leisure at an urban bar.

The lead researcher engaged in participant observation at the pub over a period of 18 months making a conscious effort to visit at various times, days, and also sit in different locations to gain a full understanding of pub life. A cell phone was frequently used to make observational jottings while in the field. These jottings were later transcribed into detailed field notes within 24 hours of leaving the field (Emerson, Fretz & Shaw, 1995).

The researchers moved from observation to intentional inquiry after gaining a thick description of the environment (Wolcott, 2008). Numerous informal ethnographic interviews (Spradley, 1979) took place during data collection, and seven semi-structured interviews were audio recorded and served to bolster participant observation. The interviews always started with the participant describing their history with The Village Pub and featured questions such as, “Why do you choose to spend your free time at The Village Pub instead of somewhere else? What are some of the pub’s defining characteristics?”

Data from field notes and interviews were analyzed using Creswell's (2013) method for analyzing ethnographic data. Field notes and transcripts were read over and preliminary codes were made. The preliminary codes were further consolidated into focused codes, focused codes were grouped into thematic categories, and analytic memos were written around individual themes. Analytic memos were then compared with the data to solidify the claims of the researchers. The final analytic process entailed constructing the data into a synthetic narrative that endeavored to create narrative coherence around the generated themes (Polkinghorne, 1995).

The data are presented in both a conventional analytic format and in the form of research vignettes. These vignettes represent the major themes. The narrative presented is not verbatim reporting of events as they occurred, but neither is it a fiction. Rather, this form of synthetic narrative analysis constructs stories from the data in a way that reflects the study's findings (Polkinghorne, 1995; Van Maanen, 1988). The data is presented in what Van Maanen calls a confessional tale to elucidate the experiences that the reader cannot have unless in the environment. The article moves back and forth from a narrative voice to an analytic voice in order to strengthen the themes presented, and, in the end, provide some interpretation. Similar approaches to explorative studies in communal leisure experiences have provided fascinating accounts (Dunlap, 2009; Glover, 2007; Johnson, 2005; Mair, 2009).

Trustworthiness

Throughout the study the first author took steps to improve the trustworthiness of the data and its subsequent representation. Frequent checks with participants were made to acquire feedback and confirm the accuracy of data, a process known as member

checking. Further, the first two authors engaged in a continual dialog related to the fidelity of the interpretations and representations of this data. Lastly, we scrutinized our process and findings in an effort to account for our positionality, subjectivity, and affinity for third places (Madison, 2012).

Setting

The Village Pub is located in the community of East Nashville, Tennessee. East Nashville has recently experienced considerable growth and gentrification, and the physical and social environments have transformed over the last decade (see Llyod, 2011). A recent article captures the recent cultural shift in East Nashville well, “on blocks where a year ago you might have been mugged, you can now buy locally made chocolate” (Severson, 2012). The population of the combined two major zip codes is 43,547, of which 25,257 are white and 15,818 are African American.

The Village Pub resides deep in East Nashville within a small pocket of commercial development known as Riverside Village. Riverside Village is home to a gas station, a record store, a Japanese restaurant, a barbeque joint, and an ice cream/coffee shop. The two most frequented establishments in the village are the pub and Mitchell’s Deli. The Village Pub sticks out as a charming, oak colored building that has been renovated from an old bungalow. Mitchell’s deli stands next to the pub in contrast as a modern, newly constructed building.

Findings

The themes below depict the major findings of the study. These findings describe the pub’s defining characteristics, behaviors within the pub, meanings patrons associated with the pub, and benefits of patronage.

Defining Characteristics

The pub has many defining characteristics, and none is more noticeable to a first-timer than its low-key atmosphere. The inside of the pub is very modestly decorated, kept dimly lit, the decibel level is usually unobjectionable, and the floor plan is very open with many different comfortable seating options. Oldenburg (1999) described old pubs or taverns as places where the regulars and staff set the tone, instead of cooperate management team doing it for them, and that is very much the case with THE PUB.

The pub is also fairly accessible. The pub, although located deep into the East Nashville community, is located in a residential area. Thus, the citizens of Northeast Nashville are not a far drive from the pub. However, due to its popularity many people drive from some distance to frequent the pub. It is on the corner of two roads that service different sections of East Nashville. The outside features a large gravel parking lot with two separate entrances. However, it should be noted that more people seem to drive to the pub than walk, and this is somewhat contradictory to the third place concept.

The Village Pub is known for great customer service. Participants frequently cited staff friendliness as a defining characteristic of the pub. Observations repeatedly depicted staff as providing prompt service, using first names, remembering patrons' orders, and providing special accommodations to regulars.

It seems like (the staff) like to be there too. I always hate it when you go to restaurant, and I understand, I have worked in service industry too, and someone is obviously having a terrible day. I get a sense that (the staff) want to be there too. That feeds into it, that matters. It seems silly, but it matters. (Samantha)

Another defining characteristic of the pub is its niche menu and atmosphere distinguished the establishment from others in town. “When you go to the pub, you are going to get a craft beer or drink a nice whiskey, and probably eat a pretzel sandwich,” said Samantha. Regulars informed the lead researcher the niche menu, atmosphere, and customer service was due to the owners. Jesse, the owner, captured this well.

It is not a burger or a coke, or a beer. You can get that somewhere else. You want to come and enjoy that in a nice environment; good décor, clean, authentic. You want great service and want that person to walk up to you, be it the server, bartender, food runner, you want them to care, by God, that I am here. I am eating food and want to get that right, and want that to segue right into being friends with you.

There are also regular patrons of the pub. These regulars not only are well known by the staff, but many know each other well. For example, Terry stated he once through a party at his house, and over 50 people from the pub came. Further, observations show regulars often were responsible for the topics of conversations during weekday happy hour. The topics of these conversations are always playful, and often center on things happening in the neighborhood (e.g. new restaurants opening, or an upcoming show). The regulars, therefore, often contributed to the overall social atmosphere within the pub, which was easy-going and welcoming.

Lastly, the pub was accommodating. Smoking is only allowed on the porch, which seemed to work well for smokers and nonsmokers alike. Also, staff would serve groups or single patrons equally well. It was not rare for someone to come alone and read

in the corner, and even more often big groups would come in and rearrange tables and chairs to their liking.

I pass it on the way home from work, all sweaty and gross, and stop in anyways. It is right there, and (the staff) don't care (that he is alone or in need of a shower). (Carl).

Behaviors

The main activity at The Village Pub is conversation. This is partially due to the low-key atmosphere that features only two television sets, fairly neutral music selections, and the environment the staff creates. However, it is also due to the regular patrons who come and choose to converse with others.

Sometimes I go just to see who is there, and stir up conversation. (Paul)

There are rare occurrences when conversation is not the obvious main feature of pub life. Occasionally, a couple may come in and play cards in a corner, or a group may celebrate a birthday or special occasion. Also, the pub used to serve as the Nashville Predators, the local professional hockey team, bar. At the peak of hockey night, people would be seen standing shoulder to shoulder inside, would come in sports jerseys, and the pub would be louder than normal. Also, Monday nights is 'Mule Night', and the pub's house cocktails are half off. Mule Mondays are therefore very busy, and much louder than normal. However, even in these noted occurrences, conversation is still prevalent if not the main activity.

Conversation is the major activity, and the nature of those conversations is playful. Playful behavior keeps things light, keeps things in perspective, and keeps third places as the safe place to visit others outside the home and work place (Cheang, 2002;

Oldenburg, 1999). One can often hear regulars and bartenders teasing each other at the bar inside. Outside, groups often erupt in laughter as they tell stories and swap jokes.

It is almost like when one goes in there, if you are a part of a group, it is almost like a celebrity roast. We all just, in a great way, trash talk. (Terry)

Meanings

The pub was described as a yoga mat, social club, town hall, and community center with beer. The pub had several different meanings, but participants were not comfortable with labeling it *just* a bar. Some, like Joseph and Carl, were comfortable comparing the pub to an English or Irish pub where neighbors would meet on frequently, but most drew on examples outside of restaurants and bars to make comparisons. Patrons attached several different meanings to the pub, but it was clear that it was viewed differently than other bars or restaurants.

More than a bar I think. I think I could go there and have a diet coke and be happy. For me the alcohol is not the focus. As opposed to a lot of bars where the focus is the booze. (Samantha)

Researchers have argued that third places could serve important roles for people's emotional well being by offering a place to safely socialize (Glover & Parry, 2009; Rosenbaum, 2006; Oldenburg, 1999). Thus, these places can then become very important to people, and often people can view third places as their home away from home or talk about them in a possessive manner. The pub had that affect on the regulars. Many felt as if the pub was "their" place, and felt that their pub life encapsulated a lot about who they were.

I feel personal investment in the pub. I think to me more than anything, I have become such good friends with the owners of the pub, such good friends with the bartenders and the people who frequent the pub, that literally most of my social life I have to owe to the pub. I definitely feel, just based on the fact that I have invested so much into the people who are there, I feel like I am part of it now. Its success, although I don't get any credit for it, is my success as well. For me I feel like I have become an unpaid, unofficial ambassador of the pub. (Paul)

Benefits

Participants enjoyed a *sense of community (sic)*, being recognized by staff, unexpectedly seeing someone they knew, and meeting new friends at the pub. "I don't go for the cheap drinks," said Joseph, "I go for the sense of community I get." This sense of community served the purpose of belonging for a guy like Joseph, and provided what Oldenburg (1999) called spiritual tonic for others. "Rarely am I in a bad mood, but if I am I come to the pub and see guys like Joseph or Paul. It cheers me right up," stated Terry.

Regular patrons liked having a place that was, at least in some way, their own. Paul stated that he was proud of what the pub had become, and liked sharing information with others about the pub. Carl stated, "The pub is the first place I suggest to anyone," and indicated he liked to entertain friends from out of town at the pub. Furthermore, several participants actually moved their residence to be in closer proximity to the pub because it was important for them to be close (i.e. Paul and Carl moved within a few miles of the pub intentionally to be closer to the pub). The pub, therefore, definitely resonated on an emotional level with many folks.

This place is magical. The pub, and this is not a bad thing, the pub has stripped me of a lot of my past life. In a good way. Because I don't have to keep up with what (people are doing in his previous place of residence). (Terry)

It is obvious regulars like Terry benefited from the pub, but less regular patrons benefited as well. For example, a couple informed the lead researcher they just liked having a place to invite friends out to and socialize on occasion. Further, they stated that the pub allowed them to be seen in public by their friends and others, and this helped them establish their identity as a couple. These findings helped solidify the claims of informal interviews with nonregulars who stated although they did not regularly frequent the pub, they did receive some social benefits.

It was spring, and I had been frequenting the pub for months. I was starting to see people I knew, and was occasionally recognized. Mostly, I was observing, and I was enjoying the opportunity to belong to a place in the neighborhood.

There was no doubt the pub was the place I longed for. It oozed comfort with its dimly lit, oak interior. The always-appropriate decibel level and friendly staff made the pub welcoming and inviting. Small touches like metal tankards lining the wall made it unique, and set it apart from other bars in the honky-tonk capital of the world. However, I was aware there were things I could not yet describe about the pub.

I could not yet paint the full picture. Maybe it was just I was not a full-blown regular, or maybe it was something else. Either way, I was hopeful that Joseph might explain some things that night. Joseph and I had a mutual friend outside the pub, so that made asking him for an interview easy.

“Hey Brad!” Michael, the large, friendly bartender, said without pausing from his duties behind the bar as I entered the pub. I nodded my head, smiled, and was satisfied that he knew my name. It took a few seconds, but I eventually spotted Joseph at a table tucked in the west corner of the building. The area used to be a bedroom, but was now only partly secluded from the rest of the inside. A large window had been cut out of the wall to provide seating and access to the bar, and the door had been removed from the archway.

“This cool?” Joseph asked referring to the table.

“This is great. Thanks for meeting me. Are you cool to chat about the pub too?” I asked being a little put off to see Paul accompanying Joseph.

“I’d love to,” Paul informed me.

“He is the guy to talk to about the pub.”

“Well, I appreciate it. How about I get us a few beers?” I asked as Macy, our short and charming server, approached.

“What up?!” Macy blurted out in her best hardcore voice.

“Nutn’ homey,” Joseph quipped back.

“Beers?”

“Yep, Black Abbey Rose,” Paul stated without hesitation.

“Yep,” is all Joseph needed to say to communicate he wanted the same.

“And...”

“Brad.”

“That’s right. You too?”

“Cutaway IPA for me.”

Macy left, and our conversation stayed informal for about thirty minutes. All three of us had made it through our first pint before I had really asked any of my structured questions. I was having a good time, but decided to shift gears.

“So, Joseph, finish telling me about the pub’s defining characteristics.”

“Well, you have to make stands now. It is a little bit like the old pubs or whatever, but the pub has an environment to draw you in. Like craft beers, and...”

“Sorry,” Paul says looking down at his Iphone. “The Cavs won the lottery.”

“Again? I told you this would happen!” Joseph exclaimed.

“Unbelievable.”

My initial fear was being realized. The two old friends were carrying on just like they would on any other night out at the pub. I was not getting many questions answered, nor was I getting any closer to understanding how to fully describe the pub.

“So, why spend your free time here at the pub, as opposed to other places in the neighborhood? What makes this place so great?” I asked trying to sound skeptical.

“We have gotten to know so many people here. If no one is here you still know the bartender and are able to hang out. Plus, the thought of standing in line or having to fight my way to the bar is...”

“Elbow to elbow,” Paul says cutting Joseph off.

“Yeah, or having to worry about bumping into someone. We also do a lot of stuff outside...”

“You have told him about this?”

“Like, we played in a baseball league with the owner.”

“That’s cool. Jesse right?”

“Yeah, Jesse. To be honest, one of the biggest reasons I come here is because I am connected to people here, and also my love for Jesse and Tracy. I don’t know if you know this, but Jesse’s wife, Tracy, passed away. Jesse and Tracy opened this place together, and we got to know them well,” Paul stated.

I had finally peaked their interest. Patrons had come and gone near us, and tables were continuously cleaned and reset. It was busy for a weeknight, and casually dressed young adults and middle-aged folks made up the demographics. It had taken an hour, or possibly two pints each, to get into what I considered the meat of the conversation.

The next hour or so was full of thorough explanations of why the pub was indeed more than just a place to have a drink. I learned how Paul bought a house in the neighborhood just to be close to the pub, and how some of the guys’ closest friends came from the pub. I quit noticing the patrons around us during this part of the conversation. In fact, I was surprised when I eventually looked down at my watch. It was nearing 10 p.m. I already switched to water some time ago, and I started to feel exhausted as the conversation wound down.

“Well, thank you so much guys. This has been so helpful,” I said trying to sound professional.

We settled the tabs, used the men’s room, and headed out. The guys greeted a few people on their way out, and I waited off the porch to say goodbye. Both of them gave me a handshake before pulling me in for a hug.

I was glad that I interviewed Paul and Joseph in the end. Not only did they provide a lively interview, but they also invited me to a party they were having at the pub

in a few months. Most importantly, I realized, in time, they had touched on an important part of the pub's story, how it was created.

Interpretation

The data support claims that third places can still thrive in contemporary society (Cheang, 2002; Glover & Parry, 2009; Hawkins & Ryan, 2013; Mair, 2009; Metta & Bosson, 2010; Rosenbaum, 2006; Slater & Koo, 2010; Teiman, 2008). Many, including Oldenburg himself, have voiced concerns that establishments that fit into the third place concept may be things of the past. For example, some have argued virtual places (Ducheneaut, Moore & Nickell, 2007) or spectacular, corporate establishments (Crick, 2011) can replace Oldenburg's original idea of great gathering places. However, this study described a prototypical third place (i.e. a pub) that still fits within Oldenburg's criteria, and still provides the essential benefits. The current findings support others who argue original third place establishments can still serve important needs (e.g. diners, Rosenbaum, 2006; coffee shops, Waxman, 2006; restaurants Cheang, 2002).

The Village Pub embodies many of the characteristics that Oldenburg (1999) described. For instance, the pub maintains a low-key atmosphere, has regular patrons, is somewhat accessible, and conversation is the main activity. Also, the participants received several benefits from patronizing the pub like gaining new friends and feeling more socially connected to their community. Thus, it is fair to assume that the pub offered patrons social benefits that their home and work place could not, which was Oldenburg's major argument. These findings suggest that third place can still be a

relevant concept when it comes to studying, promoting, and facilitating communal leisure behaviors.

Discussion

This study was meant to call attention to an emancipatory form of leisure (Hemingway, 1999b), thus comparing it to the individualistic, consumptive leisure practices that suburbanization facilitates. The researchers contend that if more Americans spent time in third places, as opposed spending leisure in solitude (e.g. watching television), that our communities might be strengthened. After all, Americans spend less time in conversation over meals, exchange fewer visits with friends, and generally engage in fewer leisure activities that encourage social interaction than ever before (Putnam, 2000). Putnam argued the social significance of this decline lies in the social interaction and civic conversations over a beer or pizza that Americans forgo.

The findings of this study show that people came together at the pub, and enjoyed conversations over a beer. Participants were part of the collective, and they were involved in both the means and the ends of leisure practice (Arai & Pedlar, 2003). These findings show an alternative viewpoint to leisure than individualistic perspective that ideologies of suburbanization and sprawl continue to reaffirm.

Patrons who regularly attended the pub enjoyed many of the benefits of social leisure (Oldenburg, 1999). Patrons gained new friends, integrated into the community, formed thick bonds, and even finalized business deals all by patronizing the pub. Moreover, all patrons I talked to, formally and informally, benefited from being able to join in a casual conversation with some one they did not previously know. Previous research shows how casual conversation can help form social support systems

(Rosenbaum, 2006), encourage elderly to participate in groups (Cheang, 2002), and foster trusting and cooperative environments (Hawkins & Ryan, 2013). That alone is worth leaving the house for, from a communitarian point of view.

The findings can also shed light on trends in urban development. American cities have been, and continue to be, developed in a way that community members have no control over (Harvey, 2008). Our communities have been redeveloped in the form of large highways, parking lots, and secluded residential developments, while our sidewalks, local gathering places, and mixed-use areas are disappearing (Jacobs, 1961; Oldenburg, 1999; Duany, Plater-Zyberk & Speck, 2000). This study seeks to call attention to an alternative viewpoint on urban development. Critical urban theorists have stated citizens should have a right to participate in the development of our communities, that decisions should not be left in the hands of the few in power, and that current trends of urban development should be called into question (Harvey, 2008; Brenner, 2009).

Reconnaissance data shows that third places were hard to find. In using Oldenburg's criteria, the researchers were able to eliminate many establishments due to lack of accessibility (i.e. many popular places were squeezed into small, urban spaces that made it difficult to frequent and linger). Also, many places were so far away from residential areas that regular, repeat patrons were more difficult to attract. An excerpt from observations taken while visiting such a place articulates these points.

Parking options at (this place) are minimal. In front, there are only two parking spots . Between (this place) and the building next door is a narrow gravel area. Cars are crammed into spots on the right and left, and there is only room for one car to drive through this narrow passage... I eventually took a seat.

A piece of paper folded in to a triangle in order to stand upright on the table read “Seats and WIFI for paying customers.”

The Village Pub does provide an example of an alternative viewpoint to urban planning. The pub was created to fill a specific need within the community. Jesse and Tracy Hamilton noticed that Northeast Nashville did not have a place where people could interact in a comfortable environment. They pulled upon their decades of experience in serving, managing, and operating a small business in the hospitality industry and created the place the neighborhood needed. Jesse’s story below supports the ideas of critical urban theorists who postulate that citizens have the right to reshape our cities in manners that align with their desires (Harvey, 2008).

We moved (to East Nashville), and started hanging out. We would all say, “There needs to be a neighborhood bar here. You got to go all the way over to the five points and those bars are smoky and packed.” So, we decided to create this place... We learned a lot of stuff from big companies that we worked for that would just do dumb stuff. They would lose sight of customer interface, the people connection that is supposed to happen here. (Jesse)

The pub did attract a specific clientele, however. Most nights, the pub was made up mostly young to middle aged white males. There were a decent amount of women who attended the bar, and some on a regular basis. However, there was not great diversity in ethnicity. Thus, the findings are not representative of the diverse East Nashville community as a whole. Also, it may be that certain characteristics (i.e. craft beer, niche menu, classy interior) do not foster an environment where all ethnicities will come together.

The data leaves the researchers with questions and suggestions for future research. First, can the pub's uniqueness (i.e. niche atmosphere and menu offerings) tell researchers anything about the modern demands of patrons, and can such understandings be used to facilitate better places and thus more communal leisure? Second, it is important to note participants believed people are moving to East Nashville because they desire to be engaged in communal leisure practices, thus is it possible that people who choose to participate in the Village Pub, and other third places, are inclined to view leisure as a shared practice? Third, many participants cited things that resemble benefits associated with established social theories, thus future studies should investigate the correlation between third place behaviors and things like sense of community (see McMillian & Chavis, 1986), and sense of place (see Jorgensen & Stedman, 2001; Low & Altman, 1992) on a larger scale. Fourth, what types of places can bring different ethnic groups together? This is an important line of inquiry because even being together without conversation can lead to some socialization (Peters, 2010). Lastly, the researchers urge future studies to examine the ways in which our communities and citizens can actively influence issues of place in urban environments.

The pub is an establishment that challenges the trends of suburbanization and the individualistic leisure behaviors it fosters. The findings not only show that when people come together at a local pub that relationships can be formed, but also shows that citizens can make a difference in making sure our communities have such places. After all, it is in these places that those who face common problems find common ground, give substance and articulation to group sentiment, and offer social support to one another (Oldenburg, 1999). This study confirmed what others have recently found; that informal public life

and causal social interaction can build relationships, make one feel more connected to their community, and help them form their social identity (Glover, 2004; Jefferes, Bracken, Jian & Casey, 2009; Kyle & Chick; Rosenbuam, 2006; Waxman, 2006).

Oldenburg also reminded us that these positive experiences occur in places that are conducive to them, and when these places disappear so might the experiences.

Riverside Village was busy in a slow, lazy type of way on this summer afternoon. People were leaving the deli that sits next door to the Village Pub, others were hanging outside of the record store, and cars were in line at the gas station. I, of course, was heading to the pub, on this occasion for Paul's going away party.

I had spent a lot of time during the previous year at the pub. A lot of stories had been shared, and a lot of jokes told. It became obvious that people frequented the pub for varying reasons, but they were all attracted to the atmosphere and friendly staff. These things were no accident, but instead a product of the management's philosophy. Although I knew a lot about the pub, I still wanted to meet as many people as I could, and there would never be a better time to do so than at such a party.

I pulled in around 3p.m. and spotted many familiar faces outside. Tables and chairs, usually so perfectly spaced, had been rearranged in three sections. I got closer and realized everyone on the porch was a regular. They moved freely from group to group, much like a cocktail party. Some sipped mules out of the metal tankards, a few smoked, and most enjoyed local craft beers in 24 or 16 ounce glasses. They all looked beat down by the humidity of the Tennessee summer.

"My man!" Joseph screamed as he spotted me climbing the stairs.

I made my way around to all the groups shaking hands with those I knew, and being introduced by friends to those I didn't.

"How do you know these guys?" asked a young, blonde schoolteacher.

"I'm actually studying this place, and they helped me out."

"Really? What are 'ya studying?"

I rattled off the gist of my study, which I had rehearsed several times. Seth, a curly-haired young man in cargo shorts, nodded his head in approval while taking a drag of his cigarette. Joseph and Terry looked on with pride. The blonde and her brunette friend, both in sundresses, showered me with encouragement. Terry's friend, a balding gentleman with a handlebar moustache jumped in as well.

"My dad used have a place like that, but it ain't there no more," said the man.

"That's the point. I think we need more places like that, like this," I said.

I zoned out as the conversation continued. Normally, I would take any chance to have a deep discussion about my dissertation, but, instead, I quietly nodded my head up and down in agreement as everyone chimed in. I was just happy to be known. I felt relieved, and decided to revel in the occasion.

The party functioned seamlessly. People would talk to those they did not know without hesitation, and everyone was engaged in conversations. No one was rude or overbearing. Everyone on the porch, including myself, was welcome and accepted.

The staff handled our group perfectly. Those who were a drink or two in were waited on promptly, and were often brought their next round without having to ask.

Patrons who had been celebrating for a while were pushed food and water instead of

another round. Macy knew almost everyone's name, and treated everyone on the porch like they were old friends.

I made the rounds to the different groups like everyone else that afternoon. I sat with Terry's group for a while, swapped stories, and got stuck in an uncomfortable conversation with a frail, old man about his late friend's passing. I talked at length about how the U.S.A. could have won the World Cup, and made a list of the best and worst bars in East Nashville.

I even hung out at the bar with Brandon and Macy for a while. I had actually just gone in to use the facilities, but got interested in Macy's story about Bonaroo, the large music festival in rural Tennessee. The random people inside, which I did not recognize, looked much more comfortable in the air conditioning than the regulars out on the porch, but the interior was dull in comparison to festivities outside.

The only downside to the afternoon was that I had to leave. I had been at the party for about two hours, and needed to go. I took my time, and revisited all the groups saying long goodbyes. I exchanged a lot of high-fives, hugs, handshakes, and phone numbers before walking off the porch.

I walked to the truck rehashing all the time I had spent at the pub over the last year. I realized that this afternoon provided some closure to my time at the pub. My study was coming to an end, and I was due to move out of town soon. Although no one knew, perhaps it was my going away party as well. I rolled the windows down, and let my head fall backwards against the seat of the truck. It had taken over a year, but it felt like was a regular, if only for that afternoon.

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CHAPTER V
THE EFFECT OF THIRD PLACE USE
ON SOCIAL AND PLACE BONDS

Leisure behaviors in America have received widespread attention in recent decades. For example, the link between poor physical health and sedentary leisure behaviors has been a topic of national scrutiny, and fueled hundreds of research projects over the last decade (see Thorp, Owen, Neuhaus, & Dunstan, 2011 for a review). The impacts of certain leisure behaviors are not only physical, but have social consequences as well. For example, Robert Putnam's (2000) *Bowling Alone* made it painfully obvious that Americans spend more time pursuing isolated leisure activities, are less civically engaged, and spend less time in the company of others. Leisure behaviors have important impacts on our communities, thus it is just as important to highlight leisure practices that foster positive social benefits.

The current study focused on leisure behaviors that are communal in nature, and attempted to investigate the benefits that such pursuits may offer. The researchers were encouraged to do so by the plethora of scholars that argue shared leisure practices can offer a wide array of social benefits (Hemingway, 1988; Hemingway, 1999a; Arai & Pedlar, 2003). For example, recent studies have shown that participating in a local community center can develop people's sense of citizenship (Glover, 2004), that spending time in public parks can help socially integrate people of different backgrounds (Peters, 2010), and that volunteering in urban gardening can facilitate attachment to place (Dunlap, Harmon & Kyle, 2014). Therefore, the present study focused on continuing research that investigates the benefits of social leisure.

This study focused on individuals' use of public gathering places that are accessible, welcoming, and foster conversation. Oldenburg (1982) originally argued that places that foster lingering, conversation, and informal socialization provide many benefits to individuals and communities. He called these places third places, and provided examples of such places like English pubs, American soda fountains, French cafés, and coffee shops. Recent research has depicted new types of third place establishments (Crick, 2011; Hawkins & Ryan, 2013; Slater & Koo, 2010), explained how support systems are formed in these places (Cheang, 2002; Glover & Parry; Rosenbaum, 2006), and provided descriptions of the physical features make for a third place (Mehtta & Bosson, 2010; Waxman, 2006). However, few studies have investigated Oldenburg's claims of individual and communal benefits on a large scale (exception is Jefferes, Bracken, Jian, & Casey, 2009). Thus, the current study focused on investigating Oldenburg's (1999) claims that third place use will lead to a variety of social benefits.

Purpose and Research Questions

The purpose of this study was to understand if there were correlations between third place use and social benefits. Specifically, this study used the constructs of sense of place (SOP) and sense of community (SOC) to represent these social benefits. SOP is a construct that encapsulates human-place bonding (Farnum, Hall & Kruger, 2005), and SOC is a concept that measures social connections with a community (Trentelman, 2009). The analysis consisted of two separate models that contained the two aforementioned constructs, and also confounding variables that previous research models identified (i.e. home ownership, length of residence, ethnicity). The following research questions were applied to each model:

- 1) Is there a significant relationship between the dependent variable (SOP in model 1, SOC in model 2) and third place use when statistically controlling for the confounding variables?
- 2) How strong is the relationship between the dependent variable and third place use when statistically controlling for the confounding variables?
- 3) What is the direction of the relationship between the variables?

Shared Leisure Practices

Leisure can be viewed in a variety of ways (see Parr & Lashua, 2004), and Americans have been noted to view leisure as an activity to be consumed (Hemingway, 1999). This individualistic, consumptive view uses leisure as a way to satisfy one's individual interests, and at times with no regard for the social consequences of these actions (Arai & Pedlar, 2003). For example, activities like watching television alone have increased, while activities like voluntary participation in local civic organizations have decreased (Putnam, 2000). Leisure scholars have argued that this view of leisure takes away from the true potential of leisure, and have many have called for a communitarian view of leisure (Arai & Pedlar, Glover & Hemingway, 2005).

Hemingway (1988) argued that leisure provides the opportunity for one to better themselves and their community. This conceptualization of leisure dates back to Aristotelian idea that leisure is the opportunity for individuals to be involved civically, democratically, and the to better themselves for the sake of it. Leisure viewed in this way stresses that leisure can be used for the common good of the community, and for individual benefits. These benefits will not occur while watching television alone, but yet when individuals decide to engage in activities with others (Arai & Pedlar, 2003). The

researchers refer to these activities as shared leisure practices. For example, people can come together and enjoy sport while participating in a local club (Mair, 2009), or develop bonds with people and places by annually attending a local festival (Kyle & Chick, 2007).

The current study highlights the shared leisure practice of patronizing public places. Frequenting public places offers people a chance to meet new people, form relationships, and become more comfortable with different ethnicities (Cheang, 2002; Peters, 2010; Rosenbaum, 2006). Therefore, this study decided to focus on participants' behaviors in relation to public places. The researchers focused on Oldenburg's (1999) topic of third place as a way to conceptualize public places that foster shared leisure practices.

Third Place

Prototypical third places offer people social benefits that the home and work place cannot (Oldenburg, 1999). These benefits are possible because third places have specific characteristics. Third places, unlike work places, are free of social statuses and act as levelers. For example, in a third place an employee and a manager can socialize together while no longer being bound to the employee-manager relationship. Further, third places are public places where people from the community gather, thus third places offer social leisure that one's private home usually does not. Moreover, third places are also characterized by easy access, a low profile, maintaining a core of regulars, and most importantly by conversation.

The unique characteristics described above facilitate things like novelty, perspective, and friends by the set (Oldenburg, 1999). Recent qualitative studies have

supported this argument by documenting that third places can facilitate novel and fun conversation (Cheang, 2002), help maintain a healthy perspective (Glover & Parry, 2009), and also build networks of friends (Rosenbaum, 2006). Also, Oldenburg (1999) argued that whatever is good for the individual also benefits the greater good. This claim is more difficult to measure, but Jefferes, Bracken, Jian, and Casey (2009) were able to show that community members' perceptions of available third places was correlated to increased quality of life. The authors argue that more work on large scales, like the Jefferes, Bracken, Jian and Casey (2009) study, is needed to compliment and support the qualitative work that has been done.

This investigation was specifically focused on Oldenburg's (1999) claims that frequenting third places might foster a connection to the people in the community, and also to the place they live in. The present study aimed to do so by using constructs that can elaborate on such connections. The researchers decided to use SOP to investigate the assertion that third place patronage can foster a human-place connection, and SOC to understand if frequent third place use can foster social connections.

Sense of Place

Human-place bonding has been shown to be a very complex phenomenon (Relph, 1976; Tuan, 1979). For example, Hay (1998) showed that many things like personal relationships, insider status, and length of residence all played important roles in developing a bonds to a place. Furthermore, Stedman (2008) described how the meanings ascribed to places affect the bonds people create. Moreover, Stokowski (2002) argued that social, political, and historical factors shape the way individuals view and interact

with places. The researchers chose the SOP construct to encapsulate the human-place bond due to its complex nature.

Sense of place is the all-encompassing term that reflects a wide variety of human-place bonding (Jorgensen & Stedman, 2001). Simply explained, the construct is the general sense of an individual's emotion, bond, or recognition of a specific place (Altman & Low, 1992). The more complex way of understanding sense of place is to unpack the dimensions that measure the construct. Jorgensen and Stedman (2001) put forward a model that included affective attachment, place identity, and place dependence. This model was based on the argument that human-place bonding can be considered an attitudinal construct consisting of the three aforementioned components. Recently, researchers have added social bonding to better encapsulate the human-place phenomenon (Kyle, Mowen & Tarrant, 2004).

The SOP construct provides a very thorough way to understand how environments can become places imbued with specific meanings (Tuan, 1977). The affective attachment dimension measures the emotions responses toward a place (Kyle, Mowen & Tarrant, 2004). Place identity measures one's self-concept and self-identity in relation to place (Proshansky, Fabian & Kaminoff, 1983). The dimension of place dependence measures one's preference for a specific place (Williams & Roggenbuck, 1989). Lastly, the dimension of social bonding measure social connections or attachments within places (Kyle, Mowen & Tarrant, 2004), and its inclusion is supported by research that depicts social ties as important to human-place bonds (Hidalgo & Hernandez, 2001; Mesch & Manor, 1988).

The study of human-place bonds is very diverse. For example, there is a long history of phenomenological work in place literature (Relph, 1976; Tuan, 1979) that still continues (e.g. Kyle & Chick, 2007; Milligan 1998). Furthermore, there is a plethora of research that uses the term place attachment to encapsulate positive emotional connection to place (Lewicka, 2011 provides a review of 40 years of research), and of course there is the research that uses the SOP concept. Again, the researchers use SOP because of its ability to encapsulate the complexity of the human-place phenomenon. However, this study also calls upon another construct to understand the complex nature of social connections.

Sense of Community

The SOC construct measures particular types of social relationships within a place (Trentleman, 2009). SOC differs from SOP because it focuses on the social relationships and connections with a specific place, while SOP is concerned mostly with human-place bonding (Trentleman, 2009). Community research in this vein often pays homage to a landmark study produced by Kasardra and Janowitz (1974). This study showed a) that length of residence, social status, and age were strong predictors of social bonds, and b) that population size and density did not weaken bonds. This study inspired many researchers to study social connections and bonds within communities, and the construct of SOC eventually was formed.

McMillian and Chavis (1986) eventually developed the construct of the SOC. The researchers hoped to use the construct as a tool to build communities on trust and faith and not around fear or hatred, and many have used the concept since (Francis, Giles-Corti, Wood & Knuiiman, 2012; Long & Perkins, 2003; Perkins & Long, 2002). The key

dimensions to SOC were defined as membership, integration and fulfillment, influence, and emotional connection. Membership involves boundaries of acceptance, a sense of belonging, and a common symbol system for communication and social behavior. The aspect of influence details the extent to which members feel influential in a social group, how the community has influence to conform members, and how these influences work for individuals and groups. Integration and fulfillment are valuable dimensions that serve to reinforce community and individuals, and further depicts how people work together to meet needs. Lastly, shared emotional connection is an aspect that encapsulates quality social interaction, shared values, and spiritual bonds.

The concepts of SOC and SOP were both used in order to thoroughly explore the benefits of third place use. SOP allowed the researchers to understand if third place use is correlated with developing a bond with the community of East Nashville, while SOC allowed the researchers to understand if third place use was correlated with social connections within East Nashville. Both concepts have known predictors that are length of residence in a community, homeownership, whether or not an individual has children, communitarianism, and confidence in the community (Lewicka, 2011; Long & Perkins, 2007). Therefore, the extraneous variables were also collected to control for their possible effects on levels of SOP and SOC.

Methodology

The study was guided by a methodology of survey research. Oldenburg (1999) claimed that participating in third places can lead to gaining friends, becoming more connected to place, and develop a more socialized society. Many studies have supported his claim with qualitative studies (Cheang, 2002; Glover & Parry, 2009; Hawkins & Ryan, 2013; Mair,

2009; Rosenbaum, 2006; Waxman, 2006). This study focused on testing these claims on a larger scale, thus the researchers administered surveys to the East Nashville community.

Setting

Data was collected in East Nashville, TN. The city of Nashville has been cited as the “it city” for its favorable economic climate for business, and for recent development that includes vibrant nightlife, eateries, and other attractive leisure opportunities (Meacham, 2014; Seiter, 2014). The neighborhood of East Nashville is at the center of the recent cultural shift, and there are positives and negatives associated with this change. This neighborhood has experienced the pains of gentrification that are often associated with such change (Llyod, 2012), and also noted for its redevelopment that includes new restaurants, bars, coffee shops, and breweries (Severson, 2012).

Participants and Recruitment

The majority of the participants in the study were white (88%), female (69%), middle aged ($M= 40$), and middle to upper class (60% had an annual household income over \$50,000). Also, participants scored ($M=3.83$) on levels of SOP and ($M= 3.45$) on the SOC construct. These scores were on a 1-5 Likert Scale with 1 representing that individuals’ strongly disagree, and 5 representing that participants strongly agree with each statement.

The drop off, pick up method was used to collect data. This method has been shown to increase response rates in urban community studies (Steele, Bourke, Luloff, Liao, Theodori & Krannich, 2001) and studies regarding place theory (Trentleman, 2011). This method requires researchers go door-to-door offering their survey to community members, and then return to pick up the survey a within a few days. Two

researchers who had lived in the East Nashville community for several years led this investigation, and administration of the data was informed by the lead researchers' knowledge of the area. The researchers identified areas of the East Nashville that differed in terms of demographics, and sent five survey administration teams to cover these areas. This method was used in an attempt to collect data from the most diverse, representative sample possible.

In total, 400 surveys were handed out, and 118 were recovered and usable (30% response rate). Survey administrators handed out surveys from 12-3 p.m. on a Saturday, and returned to pick up the surveys in 24 hours. Time constraints and the number of volunteers available limited the amount of surveys collected in the end. Also, many surveys were left on doorsteps, and recovered the following day without being opened. Some unopened surveys were the result of people declining to participate, and many were not opened because the residents were away from home. Lastly, the researchers distributed the survey to online communities within East Nashville to increase the sample size. This provided 67 additional surveys, and brought the total number of participants was 185.

Instrumentation

The questionnaire consisted of four sections. First, participants were asked to identify third places within their community, rank these places in order of how often they use them, and then identify how often they frequent such places. These survey items have proven to be effective for identifying third place behaviors (Jefferes, Bracken, Jian & Casey, 2009). Second, the questionnaire measured SOP using the four-dimensional model put forth by Kyle, Mowen, and Tarrant (2004). Third, the researchers used the

brief SOC scale developed by Long and Perkins (2003) to avoid redundancy with place concepts used in the full SOC scale. Lastly, specific demographic (i.e. ethnicity, education, income level, family dynamics) and social (i.e. confidence in community, civic engagement) variables are known to predict SOP and SOC (Lewicka, 2011; Long & Perking, 2007). These variables were collected in order to statistically control for their effect on the dependent variables.

Data analysis was conducted using SPSS Version 21. Two multiple regression models were developed to test the research questions listed above. The purpose of this study was to understand if correlations exist between a) third place use and SOP, and b) if correlations exist between third place use and SOC. The researchers selected a multiple regression model due to its flexible nature and capability of analyzing a variety of variables (Hatcher, 2013). This study needed such a flexible model in order to control for the many confounding variables that have been identified through years of research into SOP and SOC (see Lewicka, 2011; Long & Perking, 2007). The two models were framed by the two following hypotheses:

Model 1) Participants with higher levels of third place use will be more likely to have higher levels of SOP than those with lower levels of third place use.

Model 2) Participants with higher levels of third place use will be more likely to have higher levels of SOC than those with lower levels of third place use.

Results

The results from Model 1 are presented in Table 1. The hierarchical multiple regression in this model shows that third place use is associated with increased levels of SOP. At Step 1, control variables that are known to predict SOP were added to the equation. This resulted in the equation's ability to predict sense of place, Adjusted R² = .084 F(5, 172)=4.26, p < .05.

At Step 2, the variable total frequency of place use was added to the equation that already contained the control variables. This resulted in a significant increase in incremental variance accounted for, $\Delta R^2=.046$. The full model accounted for 13% of the variance in sense of place, Adjusted R²=.127, F(1,171)=9.36, p<.05.

Table 2

Results from Hierarchical Multiple Regression: Predicting Sense of Place from Five Control Variables and Frequency of Third Place Use

Step	Predictors added	Model R ²	ΔR^2	Model 1		Model 2	
				β	p	β	p
Step 1		.110	.110				
	Length of residence			.245	.676		
	Homeowner			.245	.003		
	Children in house			.078	.318		
	Ethnicity			-.145	.50		
	Education			-.085	.258		
Step 2	Place Use	.156	.046			.226	.003

Model 1 shows that there is a correlation between SOP and third place use.

Incorporating the third place variable helped explain an extra five percent of variance

among the variables. Also, the unstandardized beta weight of third place use (.226) is considered a moderate effect, not far from a large effect of .25 according to Keith (2006), and also indicates that only homeownership and length of residence had stronger beta weights. Lastly, the unstandardized beta weight was positive, thus depicts a positive relationship between third place use and SOP. Therefore, the hypothesis for Model 1 can be accepted.

The results from Model 2 were not significant. At Step 1, the known predictors of SOC were added into the equation and were shown to be associated with the construct. However, the results of adding third place use at Step 2 were not significant. Thus, the hypothesis for Model 2 was rejected. Possible explanations for this finding are presented below.

Discussion

The third place variable helped explain the variance in individuals' levels of SOP. Therefore, Oldenburg's (1999) assertions that third place use can lead to things like connection to one's locality and people within it has been supported. Moreover, third place use had very comparable beta weights with the well-known predictors of SOP (Lewicka, 2011). Therefore, not only was third place use correlated with SOP, but also use of third places needs to be considered in future studies regarding SOP in urban environments.

Separate analyses of SOP dimensions brought forth some interesting findings as well. Third place use was able to explain an extra 6% of the variance beyond the confounding variables in affective attachment ($\Delta R^2=.064$), Adjusted $R^2=.118$, $F(1,171)=12.795$, $p<.001$. Again, the variable explained a significant 5% of the variance

in SOP beyond the control variables in place identity ($\Delta R^2=.045$), Adjusted $R^2= .128$, $F(171)=9.058$, $p<.05$. Lastly, there were similar results with the social bonding model, ($\Delta R^2=.033$), Adjusted $R^2=.103$, $F(1,171)=6.258$, $p<.05$.

Third places can help people create a casual social environment and reap its benefits (Cheang, 2002; Jefferes, Bracken, Jian, & Casey, 2009; Mair, 2009; Oldenburg, 1999; Rosenbaum, 2006; Waxman, 2006). Participants who often use third places interact with merchants, bump into friends, and meet new people. Thus it is fair to assume that participants who attend third places regularly are creating comfortable social environments. This helps explain why third place predicts higher levels of affective attachment. Participants who frequent third places and reap the benefits are likely to a) have a strong emotional bond to East Nashville, b) enjoy being in the community, and c) are happy when in East Nashville. The results in regards to affective attachment depict that third place use does foster a connection to the community.

Oldenburg (1999) argued that third place use encourages patrons to care more about their community, and that people often become possessive over their third places. These claims provide a way to view the positive correlation between third place use and place identity. For example, patrons often begin to conceptualize third places as “theirs” (e.g. “this is my place”). Thus it seems likely that the more often one uses a third place the more likely the place, and possibly the community it resides in, becomes a part of their identity. Also, third place patrons are more likely to take pride and care for their local community if they are attached in some way to places or spaces within it (Oldenburg, 1999). The correlation between third place use and place identity supported

Oldenburg's claims that people begin to identify with their communities through third place patronage.

Social bonding within communities will happen in places conducive to it, or it will not happen at all (Oldenburg, 1999). Third places are known to foster conversation, laughter, and fun. Thus, it was no surprise that third place use was positively associated with social bonding. Participants with higher levels of third place use were more likely to state time in these environments allowed them to bond and spend time with family and friends. Third places are perfect environments to develop social bonds.

These findings support the argument that spending time in the company of others can lead to positive benefits (Arai & Pedlar, 2003; Hemingway, 1988; Hemingway, 1999). Specifically, these findings give credence to those who argue spending time together can strengthen our communities. For example, Putnam (2000) argued things like participating in a local group or association can lay the foundation for trust, reciprocity, and norms. The current findings are limited to the construct of SOP, but SOP overlaps with the concepts Putnam alluded to (Lewicka, 2011; Manzo & Perkins, 2006). The positive relationship depicted between third place use and statements like, "Time spent in East Nashville allows me to bond with family and friends," and "I feel a strong sense of belonging to East Nashville" depicts third place use can be a valuable activity for the social well-being of our communities. However, data analysis produced results that showed third place use was not a significant predictor with place dependence and SOC.

The findings of a separate analysis, in which place dependence was the only criterion variable, indicate that frequenting third places does not contribute to increased place dependence. This is not uncommon, and others have found similar results. Kyle,

Graefe, Manning, and Bacon (2003) found that activity involvement was a better predictor of place identity than place dependence, and the researchers in that study proposed that finding could be due to availability of substitute places. Also, the researchers in that study cited the wording of items that referred to one activity (i.e. hiking), and proposed that expanding the questions to include more than activity could have opened the door for better place dependence prediction.

The present investigation indicates that third place use may not contribute to place dependence for a variety of reasons, but we argue suburbanization and sprawl is one possible explanation (Oldenburg, 1999). In decades past, people may have been dependent on the local soda fountain, newspaper stand, or tavern for casual social interaction and updates on town life, but not anymore (Duany, Plater-Zyberk & Speck, 2000; Jacobs, 1961). Now, people may have a variety of options to frequent, but must drive to most of them. This distance between third places and homes eliminates the tendency to see one's neighbor, or to establish a relationship within a specific community (Duany, Plater-Zyberk & Speck, 2000; Putnam, 2000). Therefore, it is possible that participants' in this study could think of several places outside of East Nashville that they would prefer to frequent, and the preference for these places may have nothing to do with whether or not one sees their neighbor.

The argument that people are less likely to spend time in places close to home also helps explain the insignificant results in Model 2. Third place use would not increase participants' ability to recognize their neighbors if they do not interact with their neighbors in these places, nor would it help someone feel confident about what people on their street want from the neighborhood. This argument gained more legitimacy when the

researchers removed SOC dimensions that referred to specifically to participants' street or neighborhood, and separately examined the more broad statements about SOC. A separate model including the same control variables from Model 2 and the dimension called community values was developed. This construct measured participants' scores to the questions "It is important that I feel a sense of community," and "I feel a strong sense of community." To be clear, statements removed were ones like, "I can recognize most of my neighbors on my street," and, "My neighbors and I want the same things from the street we live on." This new model including only the broad statements about SOC provided significant results, and showed a positive relationship third place use and community values beyond the control variables ($\Delta R^2=.047$). The full model accounted for 41% of the variance in community values, Adjusted $R^2=.41$, $F(7,177)=14.764$, $p<.001$.

Conclusion and Implications

The results of this study support the idea that spending time in third places leads to social benefits, but also suggests they are changing (Crick, 2011; Hawkins & Ryan, 2013, Slater & Koo, 2010). Third place use was positively correlated with broad, general connections to East Nashville. However, the study also showed that third place use was not correlated with increasing participants' ability to make specific connections neighbors on their street, nor was it correlated with participants' dependence on their specified third places.

The researchers argue that continued work is needed to understand the dynamic nature of third place benefits. For instance, future work should examine the claims made here that place dependence and SOC are not correlated with third place use because of issues related to suburbanization and sprawl. Furthermore, the researchers assert that the

development of a new scale could more accurately measure the benefits of third place use. A scale that addresses more of Oldenburg's (1999) assertions (e.g. gaining friends by the set) would be more specific and useful for third place studies.

The researchers acknowledge the limitations of the current study. Participants in this study were overwhelming white, mostly middle to upper class, and scored relatively high on SOP and SOC. A more diverse sample would have possibly produced more variance in the model. Notwithstanding its limitations, the researchers argue this study presented important findings for third place research, communal leisure, and for SOP.

The urban environment has changed dramatically over the few last decades (Harvey, 2008). Communities are now more likely to resemble suburban developments than traditional neighborhoods (Duany, Plater-Zyberk & Speck, 2000; Jacobs, 1961). These trends have led to a decline in informal public life (Oldenburg, 1999), and greatly influenced the leisure pursuits of Americans (Putnam, 2000). For example, people spend more time commuting from place to place in suburban developments, and less time socializing in establishments close to home (Duany, Plater-Zyberk & Speck, 2000; Oldenburg, 1999; Putnam, 2000). However, this study has shown that spending time in public places can still foster social bonds and connections to communities. Therefore, leisure researchers must continue to highlight the importance of shared leisure practices in urban settings, depict its benefits, and develop ways to foster these behaviors (Johnson & Glover, 2013).

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CHAPTER VI

CONCLUSION

Informal public life is a key component to society (Oldenburg, 1999). Public gathering places are vital in fostering informal public life and shared leisure. However, creating public gathering places is not a priority with suburban development (Duany, Plater-Zyberk & Speck, 2000, Jacobs, 1961). Therefore, the great third places Oldenburg described as so important for American communities are disappearing. This study highlighted third place behavior in an effort to highlight the benefits of shared leisure practices in public places, and also called attention to the fact that shared leisure practices are possible in the land of suburbia.

Importance of Shared Leisure

This study has gone to great lengths to highlight shared leisure practices, but the truth is that Americans have the right to choose their leisure activities. Personally, I enjoy watching television, or surfing the Internet alone at home. There is nothing wrong with pursuing these activities. The problem, however, is the ideology of suburbanization seems to only promote these types of activities. Therefore, many suburbanites view leisure as a good to be consumed (Arai & Pedlar, 2003; Hemingway, 1999), and do not value the true potential of leisure for themselves or for their community.

The rise of consumptive and individualistic views of leisure has resulted in the neglect of community and the common good (Arai & Pedlar, 2003). For example, take Putnam's (2000) finding regarding the rise of television viewing, "Nothing – not low education, not full-time work, not long commuted in urban agglomerations, not poverty or financial distress – is more broadly associated with civic disengagement and social

disconnection than is dependence on television for entertainment” (p. 231). Leisure scholars can address this neglect by returning their focus to shared leisure practices that benefit the community. For example, many leisure scholars have followed Putnam’s (2000) work on social capital with outstanding work that highlights the role of leisure in repairing our communities (Glover, 2004; Glover & Hemingway, 2005; Hemingway, 1999; Arai & Pedlar, 2002).

Putnam (2000) made it very clear that the social structures of our communities will continue to be negatively impacted by the individualistic view of leisure. While engaging in the occasionally isolated leisure pursuit is not harmful, the ideology of viewing leisure as something to be used only for personal benefit is. It is important that leisure scholars embrace the importance of reshaping the way our communities and our nation view leisure.

My message is that we desperately need an era of civic inventiveness to create a renewed set of institutions and channels for a reinvigorated civic life that will fit the way we have come to live. Our challenge now is to reinvent the twenty-first-century equivalent of the Boy Scouts or the settlement house or the playground or Hadassa or the United Mine Workers or the NAACP (Putnam, 2000, p. 401).

Third Place and Shared Leisure

The third places in this study may not be the equivalent to the Boy Scouts, the settlement house, or the playground movement, but they did show promise for fostering social connections within communities. The first article showed the Village Pub is a place where conversation is the main activity, where strangers meet, and where regulars come together to catch up about happenings in the community. Furthermore, the ethnography

of the Village Pub showed that participants were gaining several benefits from patronizing the pub. The pub helped patrons gain new friends, acclimate into the community, and offered them a comfortable place to socialize outside of their home and work place. Most importantly, people at the pub were involved in a leisure activity together, instead of being alone.

The second article confirmed that third place benefits are happening on a larger scale. Much third place research over the last decade has been qualitative and has provided deep understandings of third place behaviors on small scales (Cheng; 2006; Glover & Parry, 2009; Hawkins & Ryan, 2013; Mair, 2009; Rosenbaum, 2006). The second article showed these benefits are taking place on a larger scale. These findings show that third place behavior is facilitating human-place bonds within a community, thus the significance of shared leisure practices in public places is undeniable.

The results of this study are promising, but it is very likely that third places are changing. For example, the Village Pub was not a place where all different types of people come together to spend time in the company of others. Instead, the pub attracted a specific demographic (i.e. middle-class, whites). Furthermore, the pub was fairly expensive, largely dependent upon patrons arriving by car, and was a niche establishment. These characteristics differ from what Oldenburg (1999) described. For example, Oldenburg argued that prototypical third places were usually inexpensive, and were close to people's home. Although the pub was created to be a neighborhood bar, it is fair to say it is much different than the places Oldenburg described.

The lead researcher feels the difference between contemporary third places and Oldenburg's places could be due to suburbanization and sprawl. Prototypical third places

could rely on repeat customers that often walk to the establishment. One could argue that these places needed to solely focus on creating a welcoming environment (i.e. encourage lingering, set affordable prices, maintain a playful atmosphere). However, in contemporary society potential patrons have a plethora of options to choose from. Contemporary third places must first succeed in attracting clientele. For example, the pub distinguished itself from other establishments with its niche menu and its unique atmosphere. Third places are certainly changing (see Crick, 2011), and it is possible these changes lead to different outcomes.

The second article showed that third place participation was not correlated with things like knowing one's neighbor, helping neighbors, or feeling confident on one's street. A person would need to interact with neighbors to be able to improve upon such things. Unfortunately, the rise of sprawl and mobility makes it unlikely that people would interact with neighbors in a local third place (Duany, Plater-Zyberk & Speck, 2000; Oldenburg, 1999; Putnam, 2000). It seems that contemporary third places do not help foster social bonds between neighbors because neighbors are more than likely not spending time together in local establishment. Instead, people are driving to their favorite public places, and thus are not likely to bump into their neighbor next door when they are miles away from home.

The second article also showed that the more participants used public places the more likely they were to have higher levels of SOP. This is great news, but it is also troubling that spending time in public places is not doing anything to foster social ties to our neighbors next door. The fact that our residential areas are so often secluded from our possible public gathering places is certainly contributing to this issue. Suburbanites, for

the most part, must get into their car to drive to work, to visit a friend, or to hang out in a third place. It is just not likely that they neighbor would have driven to the same place at the same time, thus Americans are not likely to socialize with the people immediately next door.

Implications for Research and Practice

Developing a scale specific to third place would help explain more of the benefits that occur in these places. For example, it may not be logical to expect that frequenting a third place may foster social bonds with neighbors, but it may be logical to expect that frequenting a third place would lead to new friends. Also, it is not reasonable to expect third place use to contribute to a connection to one's street, but this study depicted it is reasonable to assume that third place is correlated with a connection to the larger community. Therefore, future research should focus specifically on the benefits contemporary third places may offer.

The concepts of quality of life (Jefferes, Bracken, Jian & Casey, 2009) and SOP (current study) have proved beneficial tools for understanding third place benefits. However, third place benefits are more specific than these concepts can measure. For example, it is important to understand if spending time in third places is correlated with any of the following: a) gaining friends by the set, b) maintaining a healthy perspective, c) experiencing novelty in leisure activities, d) fostering democratic or civic conversations or activities, and e) establishing social norms. These are all claims that Oldenburg (1999) made in regards to third places. Developing a new scale to include these items may help researchers better articulate the benefits of third place use. At the least, such a scale would be more specific to third place use.

Furthermore, future research must examine the role third places play in fostering civic and democratic engagement. Oldenburg (1999) argued that third place participation fosters democratic participation in communities. This study, although restricted by limitations, found no evidence that this was taking place. Civic and democratic engagement are key concepts in repairing the social structure of our communities (Putnam, 2000), thus it is important that future third place research investigates this issue specifically.

This research also has implications for practitioners, communities, and average citizens. Citizens and community organizations across the nation are fighting for their rights to reshape their cities in the image of themselves (e.g. Right to the City Alliance, Fisher, Katiya & Shragge, 2013; Places in the Making, Selberberg, Lorah, Disbrow & Muessig, 2013). This study shows the value of fighting for and creating public places within the communities. Furthermore, article one depicts how average citizens can make a difference in creating places that foster social connections. Individuals should be just as encouraged about this study's implications as leisure researchers.

The findings of the two articles are promising, but the unfortunate truth is that third place is unlikely to repair the broken social structure within our society (Putnam, 2000). Third place does offer a different choice than the individualistic leisure pursuits that suburbanization seems to foster, but our communities have a long way to go to increasing our stocks of social capital, rebuilding trust and reciprocity, and making our communities better places to live. Nevertheless, third places are important for developing friendships, offering people a chance to socialize, and promoting leisure as something other than a good to be consumed. The shared leisure practices that take place within

places like the Village Pub are beneficial to our communities and the people within them. It is time that more researchers, advocates, and normal people champion our great third places.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A
INTERVIEW GUIDE

Introduction

1. Tell me about your history or first experience with the village pub.
- 1a. Describe a typical outing at the village pub.

Third Place

2. What is it about the THE PUB that makes you want to spend your free time there, as opposed to say a more recognizable place like Chillis or something?
3. What are the main activities that you engage in and witness while patronizing?
4. What are some of the attributes of the THE PUB that you like? What are some of the THE PUB's defining characteristics?

**If needed – Are there regulars there, if so describe them.

6. In your opinion, how is the THE PUB different than previous generation's gathering places (e.g. think of Cheers, an old tavern, possibly a town square or main street).
7. How would you define this place? For example, does the word bar or pub accurately describe this place for you?

***If needed - Does this place mean anything to you on a personal level?

8. What about the THE PUB contributes to the meaning you just described?

****If needed --- Does the THE PUB offer anything to the citizen's of this community besides food and drink? If so, what?

-- Follow up, have you personally benefited from patronizing the THE PUB by gaining more friends, meeting new people, or by feeling like you have gained a place to come socialize?

Critical Urban Questions

9. Some have stated that places like THE PUB are disappearing in America due to urban planning policies that favor suburban development, dependence on vehicles, and separation of businesses and residences; do you agree? How do you feel about that?

10. Would you like to see more places like the THE PUB in this neighborhood? Why or why not?

11. Do you believe that citizens should have the ability (and the right) to reshape their environments to include places they desire?

***Follow up, do you think this is a possibility in this community?

APPENDIX B
SOCIAL SURVEY

The following are questions about your local community.	Fill in answers in space provided or circle correct choice.						
1. Within East Nashville, what types of places offer opportunities for casual conversation with friends and neighbors? List as many types of places as you like. (An example of a type of place may be a restaurant or a park).	<hr/> <hr/> <hr/>						
2. From your answers to the previous question, please list the three types of places you frequent most. 1 being most frequent, and 3 being the least.	1.	<hr/>					
	2.	<hr/>					
	3.	<hr/>					
3. How often do you visit your top ranked place?	More than once a week	Once a week	Once a month	A few times a year	Rarely if ever		
4. How often do you visit your second ranked place?	More than once a week	Once a week	Once a month	A few times a year	Rarely if ever		
5. How often do you visit your third ranked place?	More than once a week	Once a week	Once a month	A few times a year	Rarely if ever		
6. When visiting one of your favorite places, what is the most important factor when deciding where to go?	Clientele demographics	Location	Cost	Physical features of place	Products, services offered	Feeling a sense of community	Other

Please indicate your level of agreement with each statement.	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
7. East Nashville is the best place for me to live	1	2	3	4	5
8. Compared to living in East Nashville, there are few satisfactory alternatives	1	2	3	4	5
9. I can't imagine a better place to live than East Nashville	1	2	3	4	5
10. I share a strong emotional bond with East Nashville	1	2	3	4	5
11. I feel a strong sense of belonging to East Nashville	1	2	3	4	5
12. I really enjoy East Nashville	1	2	3	4	5
13. I am happiest when in East Nashville	1	2	3	4	5
14. East Nashville is a part of who I am	1	2	3	4	5
15. East Nashville means a lot to me	1	2	3	4	5
16. Living in East Nashville says a lot about who I am	1	2	3	4	5
17. I have a lot of fond memories of past experiences with family and friends in East Nashville	1	2	3	4	5
18. Time spent in East Nashville allows me to bond with family and friends	1	2	3	4	5
19. I associate special people in my life with East Nashville	1	2	3	4	5
20. I live in East Nashville because it offers various choices for social leisure activities	1	2	3	4	5

Please indicate your level of agreement with each statement.	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
21. I can recognize most of the people who live on my street	1	2	3	4	5
22. Very few of my neighbors know me	1	2	3	4	5
23. I have almost no influence over what my neighborhood is like	1	2	3	4	5
24. My neighbors and I want the same things from the street	1	2	3	4	5
25. If there is a problem in my neighborhood people who live here can get it solved	1	2	3	4	5
26. People in my neighborhood watch out for each other and help out when they can	1	2	3	4	5
27. It is very important to me to feel a sense of community with people in East Nashville	1	2	3	4	5
28. I feel a strong sense of community with others in East Nashville	1	2	3	4	5
29. I believe neighborhood or community organizations could improve East Nashville	1	2	3	4	5
30. I often help neighbors (for example, watch their home while they are away, offer advice, loan them a tool)	1	2	3	4	5
31. To me, it is very important what East Nashville looks like	1	2	3	4	5
32. It is very important that people in East Nashville work together to improve the conditions of the community	1	2	3	4	5
33. In the next two years, conditions in East Nashville will improve	1	2	3	4	5
34. I live in East Nashville because I want to be engaged in the community	1	2	3	4	5

Demographic Questions		Circle or fill in the correct answer to each question in the answer column.					
35. How long have you lived in East Nashville?	Less than 1 year	1-2 years	3-4 years	5-10 years	Over 10 years		
36. Are you a homeowner in East Nashville?	Yes	No					
37. What is your sex?	Female	Male					
38. What is your age?	Years old						
39. What's your marital status?	Married	Widowed	Divorced	Separated	Never married		
40. Do you have dependents or children living in your home?	Yes	No					
41. What is your ethnicity?	American Indian or Alaska Native	Asian	Black or African American	Hispanic or Latino	Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander	White	Two or more Races
42. What is your total household income per year?	Less than \$10,000	\$ 10,00 to \$19,999	\$20,000 to \$29,000	\$30,00 to \$39,000	\$40,000 to \$49,000	\$50,000 to \$59,000	
	\$60,000 to \$69,000	\$70,000 to \$79,000	\$80,000 to \$89,000	\$90,000 to \$99,000	\$100,000 to \$149,000	\$150,000 or more	
43. What is the highest level of education you have completed?	No schooling completed	Some education, no degree	High school degree	Associate or Two-Year degree	Bachelor's degree	Master's degree	Doctorate degree
44. Have you participated in any activity sponsored by a neighborhood or community organization in the past year?	Yes	No					